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TOWN HALL, BOMBAY.

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THIRTY YEARS

OF

FOREIGN POLICY.

A HISTORY OF THE SECRETARYSHIPS

OF

THE EARL OF ABERDEEN AND VISCOUNT PALMERSTON.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF

"THE RIGHT HON. B. DISRAELI, M.P.,

A LITERARY AND POLITICAL BIOGRAPHY."

LONDON:

LONGMAN, BROWN, GREEN, AND LONGMANS.

1855.

[*The author of this work reserves to himself the right of translation.*]

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LONDON:
A and G. A. SPOTTISWOODE,
New-street-Square.

PREFACE.

THE publication of a book on Foreign Policy at a time when the public mind is so much excited by the great events which are happening in the Crimea, and when our gallant soldiers are struggling so bravely against difficulties of every kind, may apparently need an apology. Yet the greatest victories are but glorious massacres unless followed by proportionate results. A work of this nature may possibly render the reasons for this mighty conflict more intelligible, and the conditions of a future peace more explicit. The labour of the diplomatist only commences as that of the warrior ends. The Foreign Minister at length supersedes the

War Minister. It is then necessary to review our Foreign Policy, that we may know what it is we are fighting for, and what we ought to obtain.

The subject indeed is of vast extent. To do justice to all the questions which Thirty Years of Foreign Policy immediately suggest, would require many pages. Such a work might be much more easily written in four volumes than in one. On reflection, however, the author determined to compress his subject into a single volume. He thought that though his difficulties might be increased by confining himself within such narrow limits, yet, if he were in any degree successful in his design, a much clearer and more comprehensive view of the whole field of negotiation might be presented in the smaller compass than in a work on a more extended scale. A Diplomatic History of these times is yet to be written; it may possibly, at no distant time, be attempted; but even then a general sketch of the various subjects must be indispensable in order to estimate the relative influence of particular questions.

The author has striven to do impartial justice

to two able ministers. He has studiously avoided pitting one against the other. He has endeavoured to look at the acts both of Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston from one point of view. Carefully shunning the abstractions in which writers on Foreign Policy are prone to indulge, and making full allowance for the practical necessities of administration, the events as they arise are considered as they would appear to the English Secretary of State in Downing Street, and not as they might appear to a member of the Opposition, or to any extreme thinker. This method of judging political questions may not be popular; it is, however, the only one from which a just verdict on a minister can be pronounced.

But the author could not hesitate to condemn many of the measures which Lord Castlereagh agreed to at the Congress of Vienna, because they involved great moral principles, which no minister can ever be excused for sacrificing. It is true that Lord Castlereagh reluctantly consented to some of these stipulations; but this pleading can never be accepted as a sufficient excuse for his public acts. Had Mr.

Burke been alive in 1815, he would as fearlessly have condemned some of the articles of the Treaty of Vienna, as he did the first and second partitions of Poland. The author has also, throughout the book, advisedly drawn no distinction between the general Treaty and the annexed treaties of that Congress; because, if words have any meaning, they were understood to carry the same force, and can never safely be separated. This is the principle on which Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston have invariably acted, and every prudent person must admit it to be the only principle which can ever give stability and permanence to such engagements. An opposite doctrine would make the Treaties of Vienna no treaties at all, and open a chasm to dangers of which it is impossible to calculate the magnitude.

The view which the author has taken of the circumstances of 1829 and the conduct of Lord Aberdeen, is not such as has generally been adopted. But he humbly submits that it is the correct one, and hopes that those who shall dispute it, will not content themselves with vague assertions, but fairly meet argument with argument, and fact with fact. Much igno-

rance has been displayed in the hasty censures which have been passed upon Lord Aberdeen. Most of the declarations of his assailants are so decidedly erroneous that, like dreams, they ought to be interpreted by contraries. Whenever they confidently represent him as having done that of which they accuse him, as a general rule it may be as confidently assumed that he did just the reverse. One of the most recent calumnies which has been going the round of certain newspapers is, forsooth, that Lord Aberdeen, in 1828, was on such intimate terms with Prince Lieven and his family, that the Foreign Secretary sacrificed his public duty to this private friendship. Now the author may simply state, on unquestionable authority, that so far from Lord Aberdeen being as warmly attached to Prince Lieven as has been asserted, Lord Aberdeen's representations at St. Petersburg occasioned this ambassador's recall.

What is said on the Affghanistan policy will probably surprise many persons. It, however, curiously coincides with some passages which Count Ficquelmont has written in a recent pamphlet, published after that portion of this work

was concluded. Count Ficquelmont has at length spoken out; and in his Politique de la Russie et les Principautés Danubiennes, really says some very sensible things, which it might be well for all ministers of state to take to heart. It would indeed be absurd to prevent Russia from encroaching upon Turkey, and still to leave Central Asia open to her arms and her machinations. On consideration, it may appear that there is at least one more indispensable "point" which must be added to the other four, before a peace worthy of the name can be obtained.

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THIRTY YEARS

OF

FOREIGN POLICY.

INTRODUCTION.

On the 27th of December, 1852, the Earl of Aberdeen, as prime minister of England, developed his future policy in the House of Lords. An unusually large number of peers were assembled, the members of the House of Commons crowded round the throne, and the ambassadors of all the great powers occupied seats in the galleries. His exposition was attentively listened to; but the most striking passage consisted of these remarkable words: "The truth is, my lords, that though there may have been differences in the execution, according to the

different hands entrusted with the direction of affairs, the principles of the foreign policy of the country have, for the last thirty years, been the same." This opinion of the prime minister has been the cause of much controversy, and has been fiercely criticised. Party assailants, whose object it is to represent Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston as inveterate antagonists, and as the representatives of two opposite courses of policy, have made this emphatic sentence of the venerable statesman the text of much acrimonious commentary. His enemies have not hesitated to stigmatise this sentiment as dishonest, and as contradictory to the whole course of a long political career. Lord Aberdeen is, however, a man who thinks before he speaks, and this terse declaration may survive the interested invectives which it has occasioned. To every man who calmly reflects on the events of his generation, these few words may afford a key to one of the noblest problems in modern times. They at once raise him above the angry present, and while illuminating the past, become an encouraging beacon for the future.

The importance of this subject cannot be overrated. The history of Europe, the progress and the civilisation of mankind, are inseparably

connected with the foreign policy of England. But it has not always received the attention it deserved. Englishmen have, during the long era of peace, been so attentive to their domestic reforms, and the internal administration of their empire, that only at rare intervals have they taken into full consideration the question of their external relations, and the influence which England has exercised on other nations. It is time that we should awaken from our apathy, and consent to be instructed even by an Austrian statesman. As Englishmen we are under obligations to Count Ficquelmont. He has seen the importance of this question, and has set about discussing it in all its bearings. Though he is the bitter foe of England, and believes her policy to be in the highest degree pernicious to the Continental governments, it is but right that we should be taught by an enemy, and do what we can to vindicate ourselves from misrepresentation and malevolence. It is but right that Englishmen should take up the gauntlet which has been thrown down. Not by a minister of Austria only does our foreign policy deserve to be studied. We owe it to ourselves, we owe it to our ancestors, we owe it to our children, we owe it to all future generations of Englishmen, and

to all who may in the most distant times respect the name of England, to show that at this momentous epoch in human affairs we were not indifferent to our good name, nor insensible to our glorious vocation.

Count Ficquelmont's elaborate production is entitled, Lord Palmerston, l'Angleterre, et Le Continent. The work might, at least, have been expected to make its appearance while Lord Palmerston was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. But this was not the case. The first volume was published after his lordship's retirement from the Whig Ministry; and the second has been issued since the accession of Lord Aberdeen to power. Count Ficquelmont's opinions, therefore, do not depend on circumstances. Lord Palmerston is the nightmare that is ever oppressing him: the two volumes which he has produced are but the introduction to the many that are to follow on the same inexhaustible topic. In the interval, furious pamphlets proceed from the same fertile pen, all breathing detestation of Lord Palmerston, and of this unfortunate nation. Like all great men, Count Ficquelmont has a mission. He is the literary champion of the three great powers, and the mortal foe of England, and of constitutional

government. To do him justice, he likes no English statesman: though he nominally writes against Lord Palmerston, he certainly loves not Lord Aberdeen. He is systematic and consistent because it is England herself, and not so much any individual Englishman, that he heartily abominates.

As an indication of the ideas entertained by a considerable number of official people on the Continent, this book deserves more attention in England than it has yet received. The first volume was perused with much curiosity; but English politicians thought they had done enough by laughing at the absurdities it contained, and troubled themselves no further about Count Ficquelmont and his philosophy. This was a great mistake. Foolish as the book may appear to us, it is not therefore harmless. Because we see plainly the ignorance and prejudice of every page, we must not suppose that they are so obvious to the rest of the world. This work has been widely circulated and eagerly read. It has not only been studied by Frenchmen, Austrians, and Prussians, but in many instances implicitly believed; and the advice Count Ficquelmont gives has been systematically acted upon, by more than one minister of state at

Vienna and Berlin. In treating it with the contempt it deserves for its intrinsic value, we forgot that the individual who offered it was no mean personage. Once a follower of Prince Metternich, a late ambassador at the court of St. Petersburgh, an ex-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the man who was lately spoken of as the probable successor of Count Buol again in the Foreign Office, Count Ficquelmont must be considered as a very eminent politician. He can neither be despised, nor forgotten, nor set aside. He is an enthusiast, and his enthusiasm is all directed against this country.

The manner in which Englishmen have been treated in the Austrian dominions, the rancorous hatred which some Austrian politicans have professed to England, is no longer inexplicable. It was really stimulated by the Czar of Russia, for purposes which we can now sufficiently comprehend. This fluent author, with all his profound political metaphysics, is the dupe of Russian diplomatists. He believes he is patriotically writing in favour of Austria, while he is in reality playing the reckless game of the northern Autocrat. When the Eastern question had risen to such a tremendous magnitude, and all who had the interests of Austria most sin-

cerely at heart, saw clearly that her safety depended on the maintenance of European tranquillity; and when it was evident that had the German courts united closely with the Western powers, the peace of the world would, even at the close of the last year, have been preserved; Count Ficquelmont suspended the third volume of his great work, and wrote a pamphlet entitled Le Côté Réligieux de la Question d'Orient, violently abusing England, and counselling the suspicious policy of inaction. No person can doubt that the prime source of the eloquent author's inspiration at that important crisis, was the astute potentate whose court Count Ficquelmont had long adorned, and for whom he professes such deep veneration.*

* Though Count Ficquelmont entered public life under the auspices of Prince Metternich, and though it was by this statesman that the Count was sent as ambassador to Russia twenty-five years ago, it must not be imagined that Prince Metternich ever shared in this author's extravagant prejudices against England. There has been an Austrian minister, Prince Schwartzenberg, who went even as far as Count Ficquelmont in detestation of this country. But Metternich has never been the slave of such miserable antipathies. In 1828 he was very desirous of a close alliance with England; and it was only after his efforts to discipline and combine Europe against Russia had failed, through the

But the literary Count is a great philosopher. He considers himself a most scientific statesman. Not satisfied with the mere political routine of cabinets, he gives his readers a why and a wherefore for everything, and deals familiarly with the incomprehensible. At his touch even Lord Palmerston becomes an abstraction, an "incarnated word," and England a body that this word abuses. The respect for law and order habitually shown by Englishmen, is most

ignorance and dishonesty of the courts of France and Prussia, that he sent Count Ficquelmont to St. Petersburgh to conciliate the Emperor Nicholas. It was then that this diplomatist first became the passionate and furious enemy of England, which he has since shown himself to be. Singularly enough, General Krasinsky, in the interviews he had with Prince Metternich at that very time, was endeavouring to instil the same prejudice against England into the mind of the Austrian prime minister, with which the Czar, only too successfully, was inspiring the Austrian ambassador. "England," said the Russian emissary to Metternich, "would ruin all kinds of commerce in Europe; her ministers are merely merchants decorated with ribbons." But what did the Chancellor of Austria reply? "Oh," said he, "these are the old anti-Anglican prejudices of Napoleon." Such, indeed, they were; but they had been implicitly adopted by Nicholas, and were inculcated by himself and his agents in every court of the Continent. The Austrian empire can have no worse enemies than such shallow enthusiasts as Count Ficquelmont. (Report of Count Krasinsky to the Emperor Nicholas, June 8th, 1829.)

philosophically deduced from the plain fact of England being an island. It is, he tells his readers, owing to maritime discipline that we live in habits of obedience. The howling billows which break upon our shores, proclaim incessantly that it is only by the principle of submission we can become masters of the watery element which would otherwise keep us for ever prisoners in our island. Hence the greatness of England is inseparably associated with the spirit of loyalty; the mechanical obedience which every sailor pays to his captain's commands, is at the bottom of our respect for the law; it is therefore simple, natural, innate. The doctrine of innate ideas which our great countryman Locke combats at the commencement of his "Essay on the Human Understanding," was not the mere product of the great metaphysician's brain. Those who have denied that such a doctrine was ever held by philosophers, must now acknowledge their error. We are ourselves living witnesses of the fact. An Austrian statesman holds that Englishmen have an innate principle of obedience in their breasts; and that we plainly illustrated this extraordinary principle at the time of the Great Exhibition.

The Crystal Palace occupies no inconsiderable

portion of Count Ficquelmont's first volume. A careful reader must see that the fairy structure was the cause of much of this author's indignant eloquence. He did us the honour of visiting England at that exciting season. His august form mingled with the crowds of sight seers, who sated their delighted eyes with the wonders of industry and art. As he mused on the objects before him, two dark spectres crossed his path and disturbed his pleasant dreams. These were Mazzini and Ledru Rollin, walking arm in arm about the galleries as comfortably as though there were no monarchical scaffolds in the world. Was it in human nature that this should be endured? Count Ficquelmont's heart almost burst with indignation; his fingers itched to inflict summary chastisement on the two revolutionists and rebels. But he was obliged to restrain his emotions; and from that moment lost all pleasure in visiting the Crystal Palace which Lord Palmerston had just christened the Temple of Peace. Count Ficquelmont never set his foot in it again. "A nice Temple of Peace indeed," he said sardonically, "in which such men are the worshippers!" He resolved to make a literary crusade against England; and it must be acknowledged that he has faithfully kept his vow.

He has powerfully contributed to produce that violent antipathy to every thing English, and that absolute idolatry of every thing Russian, which is so prevalent among the Austrian aristocracy. Whatever may be the polite assurances of diplomatists, it is certain that this deeply rooted aversion to England must have important political effects, and it is necessary to treat seriously this singular production of intellectual diplomacy.

William Wilberforce once remarked that England was too honest to have any permanent connection with the Continent. Count Ficquelmont eminently illustrates that excellent man's observation; for he cannot even suppose the possibility of English disinterestedness. Not a single action of our statesmen is by him attributed to any motive but extreme selfishness. Those who gain their notions of political affairs from this book must believe that English ministers are monsters of perfidy, and the ministers of Russia, Austria, and Prussia models of political morality. According to Count Ficquelmont, England is a wolf, and Austria a lamb. The Continent would be a heaven upon earth if England would but let it alone. Her want of principle, her falsehood, her recklessness, her disregard of law and justice,

have produced all the discontent and misery of Europe.

The neglect of truth Count Ficquelmont considers the most remarkable characteristic of English politicians. He most acutely shows that this vice originates in our constitutional government. We are partisans from the cradle. Every Englishman is of a party, and carries about with him the secret of his party. He is always in the presence of his political opponents endeavouring to find out their secret and to keep his own. This habit of self-restraint naturally engenders duplicity. Our most eminent member of parliament is the best dissembler. He is a general concealing his plan of the campaign and holding himself prepared for every manœuvre. Thus, to the mind of the philosophical Count it plainly appears that this kind of habitual dissimulation gives its impress to the national character, forms the political morals of the country, and causes our political life to be nothing more than a perpetual intrigue. How then can it naturally be expected that an Englishman should have a different morality when dealing with other nations? If we are false at home, we must be false abroad.

And this is the wisdom of a statesman. This

is what a minister of Austria has learnt in the highest diplomatic stations. It is a man capable of drawing such conclusions and publishing them as the products of the highest wisdom whom courtiers and monarchs reverence, and who may once more guide the foreign affairs of a great empire in times of extraordinary difficulty, when one false step must inevitably bring about its dissolution. At the sight of such a phenomenon we can only console ourselves with an apophthegm of antiquity, and say, that the gods first smite with madness those whom they devote to destruction.

But we have, indeed, come to a pleasant state of things. England has fought the battles of the continental sovereigns, heartily struggled in their cause, subsidised their armies, spent with unexampled profusion her treasure and blood in order to maintain them on their thrones; allowed herself to be abandoned and betrayed by them, and again by them to be abandoned and betrayed; loaded her own shoulders with a debt which almost staggers credibility; when peace was brought about, generously stipulated for no advantage of her own, and even allowed herself to be considered an accomplice in crimes from which she received no benefit; and the

result is, that she is branded as the most perfidious of traitors, and as the most unscrupulous of all nations; that she is at length obliged to form a close alliance with her old enemy, in order to protect herself from the hostility of her ancient allies who owe their crowns to her tremendous exertions, her unparalleled fortitude, her unprecedented public spirit. From this we may at least learn the harsh wisdom inculcated by experience. Now, when the British Temple of Janus is once more opened, the curtain rising on another exciting drama, our flag floating in the Baltic and the Black Seas, and our soldiers marshalling for combat on far-distant shores; now, when Englishmen may be called upon to endure sacrifices of which they may yet little dream; when the map of Europe is spread out, and many of the present demarcations of states may be effaced, it is not unworthy of our consideration how our former favours have been received by those who have been the object of them, how deeply fervent are their grateful benedictions, how faithfully they have kept their engagements, how deserving they are of the heavy mortgages we have made of our revenues for their benefit.

It becomes a duty for us to ponder on the

history of the last forty years. A new era has begun: a strange future dawns upon us. The important transactions in which our diplomatists and statesmen have been engaged during this century, which must be regarded as one great chapter in universal history, may very fitly be reviewed. In the period extending from the Battle of Waterloo to the commencement of European hostilities at the present moment, our statesmen may have committed many errors; they may have been guilty both of imprudent neglect and imprudent intervention; they may have trusted too much to the professions of others; they may have supposed that their contemporaries were as sincere, as disinterested, as magnanimous, and as ardently desirous of the welfare of mankind as they themselves have been; but without prejudging the points at issue, it may be confidently asserted, that no candid person after a fair interpretation of motives, and a just consideration of the difficulties against which our ministers have had to contend, will venture to pronounce a verdict of which Englishmen have in their national character any reason to be ashamed.

With due deference to Count Ficquelmont, and to some politicians even in this country,

it may well be questioned whether our most serious mistakes have really proceeded from too much meddling with the affairs of the Continent. Our greatest errors may have rather been from too much indifference. We may have too frequently been the mechanical tools of continental politicians; and their present dislike of our country may arise from the fact that we are determined to be their mechanical tools no longer. Where statesmen once led, they are now obliged to follow. The mind of this nation is becoming every day more and more enlightened; every day the people are growing more and more sensible of the immense debt they owe to humanity. That debt must be paid. We are not now to be terrified by the bugbears of intervention and revolution; for we see clearly, that there are great powers, whose policy is a systematic intermeddling with smaller states, and that the most complete despots are the most reckless revolutionists. Is it for them to upbraid us with our unprincipled interventions? Such a reproach comes somewhat strangely from the mouth of an Austrian politician. No nation has carried the principle of intervention to such an extent as Austria; she is not satisfied with offering advice; she is not satisfied with threat-

ening; she is ever throwing her sword into the scale, in her dealing with the small states of the Italian peninsula. Her policy is a mere armed intervention: she decides all her disputes by the hand of power.

There is a wide difference between the moral influence of England and the unscrupulous military occupations of the Continental Powers. The admonitions which English statesmen have from time to time given to our humbler allies, have not been interested. It is from no selfish regard to the interests of England, but from a desire to see more attention paid to the dictates of justice and mercy, that our ministers have expressed their sentiments. Such advice is, of course, odious to those who pride themselves in making the will of the sovereign the only law of government. It is natural that these two opposite principles should clash. As long as the state of the Continent is as it is, and England remains as she is, it is idle to suppose that this country can ever be a pleasing object of contemplation to governments that were once supposed to be our cordial allies. The very existence of England is an intervention with arbitrary power. This influence cannot be destroyed, except by sinking our island beneath the seas that roll

around us. It does not depend on our statesmen, nor on the mere form of our government. A country enjoying the blessings of peace, law, order, and liberty, must ever have a greater weight in the nations of the world than one distracted by civil war, oppressed by the armed heel of tyranny, and regarding its rulers as its greatest enemies; a country possessing boundless wealth, mighty resources, and an overflowing commerce, must naturally be superior to one full of bankruptcy, discontent, and ruin. It is the triumph of freedom over despotism, riches over poverty, justice over injustice.

Nor is this the first time that it has been the peculiar blessing of England to be called by the infinite wisdom of Providence, in times of darkness and disorder, to exert the same beneficent influence on the civilisation of the world. Nor is this the first time that unscrupulous rulers have reaped what they have sown, and then have blamed the seasons and nature, and everything but themselves. Man is now what he has always been; and the operations of cause and effect are just what they ever were. If we would see the seed time of the present discontents, anarchy, and military usurpations, we must examine the deeds of the Congress of

Vienna. If we would see the results of intervention, and of non-intervention, we must cast a rapid glance at the history of the last two centuries. Then the way will be clear to follow with precision the march of events during this generation. An ancient moral will assume a new form. Great truths are ever old; delusive paradoxes only are new.

CHAPTER I.

A HISTORICAL RETROSPECT.— FOREIGN POLICY OF ELIZABETH AND OF CROMWELL.— FIRST AND SECOND PARTITIONS OF POLAND. — THE STRUGGLE AGAINST NAPOLEON.

We have before now had an enemy making use of fanaticism as an ally, declaring himself the champion of the orthodox faith, and endeavouring by this means to grasp at universal dominion. It may be well for us to remember how our ancestors have acted in times much more dangerous than ours, and when they faced a despot much more formidable. A direct attack was made on their national independence; the conquest of England was openly attempted; the means of resistance were not a twentieth part of what they are at this day. Then, as now, Europe was torn by dissensions; then, as now, England was ruled by a female sovereign.

We are still proud of the reign of Elizabeth; the hearts of Englishmen throb when they remember their virgin Queen. The foreign policy

of her long reign was the wisest, the most glorious, the most triumphant in the whole range of the English annals. It ought ever to be held in remembrance by our statesmen; it deserves especially the attention of those who set themselves resolutely to preach the doctrine of non-intervention. Never before was the name of England so much respected, never was her influence so great abroad, never did she place herself so gallantly between the tyrant and his prey. Nor was this policy adopted through any romantic notions. It was the simple law of self-preservation. Our great princess wisely saw that her own glory, and even the existence of her kingdom, were inseparably associated with the prosperity of all Protestant states who were endangered by the intrigues and the arms of Philip the Second.

It requires little imagination to find a certain resemblance between the Spanish Emperor who was the enemy of Queen Elizabeth, and the Russian Emperor who is now the enemy of Queen Victoria. Philip the Second was a consummate hypocrite, and his hypocrisy was disguised under the appearance of a zeal for orthodoxy. No power could trust to his professions. He prided himself on using for his purposes his credulous admirers, who supposed that the reli-

gious maxims which were ever on his lips must have some effect on his conduct. Europe was in his day divided into two great parties; the one struggling for religious freedom, and the other fanatically bent on keeping all the world under its dominion. By assuming the leadership of the Roman Catholic party, Philip made every enthusiastic devotee of the ancient faith a political instrument by which he endeavoured to overturn the thrones of his neighbours, and extend his own authority.

England was placed in direct antagonism to Spain. The wise statesmen who surrounded the English throne were not afraid of being called revolutionists and agitators; they proceeded systematically to support their religious brethren in every part of Europe. In the Netherlands, in Scotland, in France, wherever people were resisting oppression, or conscientiously struggling for their religious liberties, the protecting hand of England was seen. Such calm wisdom, united with such determined energy, is unexampled in our history. The achievements of Burleigh and his grave colleagues dwarf all the diplomatic feats which have ever received the applause of parliaments. England knew how to do good and avoid evil, how to hold her own amid all the convulsions of

that distracted time. Parsimonious and cautious as Elizabeth was by disposition, at a great conjuncture she rose to a height of moral heroism which to the degenerate politicians of later ages must seem incredible.

Her conduct, when the sovereignty of the Low Countries was offered to her, admirably illustrates her foreign policy. Her ablest ministers trembled; she was warned not to succour rebels; the cause of all sovereigns was represented to her as being the same; a holy alliance was by some considered advisable. Ireland was in a worse condition than even in 1797. The English were a divided nation. The fleet was insignificant, and there was no regular army. An attempt to succour the Flemings was certain to involve Elizabeth in immediate hostilities with the mighty power of Philip. Having carefully calculated all the consequences, she decided on rejecting the allegiance of the Flemings, but also on giving them at once assistance. The effect of this magnanimous resolution is well known. Philip was braved, his Armada destroyed, and Holland called into existence. When the balance of power was again disturbed by another overbearing monarch, the Dutch were our most faithful allies; they gave to us a sovereign whose genius for foreign policy was only

inferior to that of Elizabeth; and England rose to be the first power in the world. This was the fruit of that generous policy which took for its basis the principle of intervention. The result was entirely beneficial: by protecting others, we secured the greatness of ourselves; we felt that every power was interested in the great battle for religious liberty; and that England had an illustrious duty to perform in the great commonwealth of nations. What would have been the effect of an opposite policy? Had Philip been allowed to give the law to Europe, had the brave Flemings been subdued, and the Roman Catholic religion firmly established in Spain, France, and the Low Countries, the next step would have been to invade Scotland and Ireland. What would then have become of the civil and religious freedom of England?

It has been ably shown, that the warfare between Protestantism and Catholicism in the sixteenth century has now taken another form, and is seen in the conflict between constitutionalism and absolutism. This analogy was first pointed out by Burke; it was carried still further by Sir James Mackintosh, and it has been eloquently illustrated by Mr. Macaulay. The spirit of the two eras is essentially the

same. The social condition of France is not unlike what it was in the age of Henry the Fourth; and it will be well for that gallant nation, if some portion of the spirit of the glorious Prince of Navarre shall be displayed in the person of her present ruler. The English alliance was of the greatest benefit to the French nation when it was slowly recovering from that disastrous civil war which had so long laid the country desolate. The English alliance may now be of the greatest benefit to the French nation as it is breathing from the long struggle between political factions which have made a constitutional government almost impossible. Because Henry the Fourth was faithful to Queen Elizabeth, he saw himself securely seated on the throne. If the Emperor Louis Napoleon be faithful to Queen Victoria, he may transmit his empire to his descendants, reconcile the friends of liberty to his administration, unite the glories of his uncle with the virtues of Henry the Fourth, and leave a name more illustrious than that of any conqueror or any hereditary sovereign. That France became prosperous, that Henry the Fourth triumphed over all his difficulties, was due in a great measure to Elizabeth, and her spirited intervention. She gave her money readily to her French ally; and, sparing as she was of the blood

of her subjects, she willingly equipped English battalions in his cause. This was true policy, as all wise intervention must be. As Henry grew powerful, Elizabeth's inveterate enemy Philip of Spain gradually grew weaker, and Holland rose into importance. The Queen was not, however, satisfied with merely giving liberty to the Dutch, or of vanquishing her proud and haughty antagonist. She was wise and circumspect; and anxiously wished to unite all the seventeen provinces of the Netherlands into a powerful republic, that might have been a rampart to the ambition of both Spain and France. Before this noble design could be matured, our great princess died; and with her departed her lofty policy, and much of the English glory.

The two princes of the House of Stuart, who succeeded Elizabeth, had neither her generous patriotism nor magnanimity. It was not from a succession of favourites like Somerset and Buckingham that a wise and dignified foreign policy could be expected. As soon as the nations ceased to fear, they began to despise, the name of England; and from the time of Elizabeth to the time of William the Third, our kings were only in name English sovereigns. The foreign policy of the great Protector is now a hackneyed theme of eulogy. It is indeed surprising to see with

how little trouble our country rose from the state of imbecility into which it had fallen, to be again regarded as the foremost European power. This latent force is always inherent in the nation; all that is ever necessary is the spirit to call it forth, and the hand to wield it. It is only requisite for an English king to respect himself, that he may be respected throughout the world. The two first Georges had neither the genius of Elizabeth, of Cromwell, nor of William the Third; but they knew how to assert their dignity; and the country never, again sank into the former state of weakness which seemed natural to it while the Stuarts were on the throne. The fact is undeniable that every sovereign in our history, of whom we are proud, has firmly and courageously administered the foreign policy of the country.

When George the Third came to the throne he resolved to be peaceful and conciliating. The old system of foreign policy was abandoned, and the consequences soon began to develope themselves. The greatest crime in modern history was perpetrated, and from the effect of that crime we and all Europe are still suffering. It would not be difficult to show that most of the wretchedness and turbulence of this generation, the formidable aggrandisement of Russia, and all the evils we are now called upon to resist,

sprung from the first partition of Poland in 1772. Our ministers ought never to be forgiven for their culpable blindness and apathy while that iniquity was in progress. The sins of the fathers have indeed been visited upon the children. We should not now with France be at war in defence of Turkey, had we wisely intervened with France in defence of Poland seventy-eight years ago. The peace of the world might have been preserved, the principles of public law might have been asserted, and the American war might have been avoided, by opposing with resolution that shameful spoliation of the oldest European nation.

We have seen the consequences of intervention, and we may now look around and see the consequences of non-intervention. The most bitter thought attending the consciousness of our neglect is that we did not err from ignorance. The inevitable disasters which have resulted from that enormity were all foretold. In the Annual Register for that very year 1772, a most impressive warning came from the pen of Edmund Burke; and it is melancholy to contrast his earnest and emphatic language with the feeble sentences of the King's speech on the meeting of Parliament. * The ministers in their profound

* Nineteen years after the first partition of Poland,

wisdom deemed the partition of Poland unworthy of notice in the address from the throne. With this indifference so plainly exemplified, it is astonishing to find Count Ficquelmont gravely accusing us of having been the principal cause of that partition. We are acting now, he says, to Turkey, as we formerly acted to Poland, and England, not Russia, will subvert the Turkish Empire. The manner in which this extraordinary assertion is made out is curious.

The interests of the Greek religionists was the plea of the Empress Catherine for the first occupation, and the subsequent partition, of Poland; just as the Emperor Nicholas has under the same pretences interfered in the affairs of Turkey, and endeavoured to bring about its overthrow. The tactics are precisely similar; and it says little for the sagacity of diplomatists, that the second ma-

Burke still firmly repeated his emphatic condemnation of that infamous deed. He said, that weak and careless as the French ministry was in the last days of Louis the Fifteenth, he had peculiar means of knowing that had our government been prepared, in 1772, to interpose in order to prevent the partition of Poland, France would have united with England in the cause. There is, then, no excuse for the English Cabinet. Burke visited France immediately after the consummation of this iniquity, and spoke of what he had personally learned in mixing with French politicians of every description, and from conversing with the French ministers.

nœuvre has nearly been as successful as the first. In the last century, the great majority of the Poles were Roman Catholics, and it cannot be denied that for a long while they had grievously oppressed their fellow-countrymen, who, under the name of Dissidents, had, by express stipulation, a right to every privilege of free citizens. The injured Poles formed themselves into confederacies, and after the diet of 1764, in which the Roman Catholic majority, more outrageously than ever, violated the treaty of Oliva, they asked for the mediation of the powers who guaranteed that arrangement. The ambassadors of Russia, Prussia, and Sweden, presented memorials in their favour; and because England did the same, Count Ficquelmont accuses this country of having really been the cause of the nefarious proceedings of the sovereigns who afterwards divided Poland. The logic of this is truly wonderful. England was bound to protest against the violation of that treaty when directly appealed to, by those in whose interest some of its important provisions were made. But what connection the mild and judicious memorial of our minister, Mr. Wroughton, had with that shocking outrage of all law and justice six years afterwards, it is impossible to imagine. All that England can be blamed for, is that she

supposed Russia and Prussia really were sincere in their remonstrances, and believed them to have had the interests of the Dissidents at heart. But the fact is, Frederic and Catherine cared nothing for Greeks, Calvinists, or Lutherans. The welfare of the religionists was a mere pretence; what these sovereigns wanted, as the event clearly showed, was political power. The Russian troops surrounded Warsaw; resolutions were dictated by the Russian ambassadors, and transmitted to Moscow for the approval of the Empress. Thus the influence of Russia became firmly established; her armies intersected the country, and measures were gradually taken for facilitating the direct blow which was about to be struck at the national existence of Poland.

It is certainly true, as Count Ficquelmont alleges, that Austria was not the principal agent in the first partition. There can be no doubt, that on this occasion, as on others, she was compelled by her two powerful neighbours to become the participator in their crimes. Austria has always been the reluctant assistant in the designs of Russian aggrandisement. But this by no means renders her conduct justifiable, or even excusable. All who shared in the spoils of the partition must bear their portion of the guilt.

The manner in which Austria acted, was perhaps the worst of the three confederates in evil. For she professed to be the friend of Poland; it was under the mask of friendship that she occupied those provinces; and a very short while before the act of partition was declared, the Empress Queen wrote letters to the King of Poland, full of friendly assurances, and the most solemn promises never to rob him of any of his dominions. Frederic and Catherine might be considered open foes, but the blackness of Austria was doubly dyed; for she was treacherous and cowardly. She saw well the consequences of the deed. She knew that whatever might be her present gain, she was certain of ultimate loss; for Poland was the natural, and might have been the insurmountable, barrier of Germany against Russia, and when that was removed, the way was clear for the despot of the North to advance his legions to the banks of the Rhine. What made the folly of Austria still more apparent, was that the designs of the Russians upon Turkey were at that time publicly avowed, and the weakness of the Ottoman Empire plainly demonstrated. It was during that very year, while Catherine was dictating terms to Turkey, grasping at the Crimea and at the absolute control of the Black Sea, that Austria

submitted to assist her in partitioning Poland. No policy was ever more infatuated. And can Count Ficquelmont think, that because the first design of the partition did not come from the Court of Vienna, that his country is absolved from the guilt in which she participated, and by which, while seemingly acquiring additional territories, she lost so much positive strength? In this case, as in others, indeed, where Russia has been concerned, Austria has frequently erred, not so much from a desire of doing wrong, as from a fear of doing right. Russia and Prussia have generally joined together; and then Austria has been dragged with them. This was seen at the first partition of Poland; it was seen as clearly at the second; it was seen still more openly at the Congress of Vienna.

The second partition of Poland was even more shameless than the first, for it was made, as the present attack on Turkey has been made, for the express purpose of preventing reform. King Stanislaus Augustus had just given the Poles a constitution, which Burke has immortalised in his Appeal from the New to the Old Whigs. The most violent abuses had been remedied; order established; the exorbitant privileges of the nobles abandoned; legislatorial chambers instituted; a fair prospect, such as made Burke

exult for the future of Poland, seemed dawning. And what was the consequence? The rapacity and jealousy of Russia were roused, and at the very moment when the crowned heads affected such horror of the atrocious deeds of the French republicans, a new treaty of partition was signed. Six weeks after they had virtually dethroned the King of Poland, interfered with his legal rights, and occupied his territories, the famous proclamation of the Duke of Brunswick was issued, in which he asserted that the pious allies were in march to arrest the strokes levelled at the throne of France, to subdue the excesses of faction, and to restore legitimate authority. It was natural that such a declaration should have been considered hypocritical. It was natural that the allied sovereigns should have been suspected of meditating the partition of France. Such an alliance could not be expected to prosper: its failure was inevitable. The humiliation of Prussia, the defeat of her armies, and her pusillanimous desertion of what she represented as the cause of sovereigns, were the consequences of her conduct to unhappy Poland.

There was no pretence of the interests of the Greek subjects of King Stanislaus Augustus being attacked, when this second outrage was committed. These blasphemous vindicators of

monarchical authority kept no terms with the rest of mankind. Their interference was expressly to subvert a constitution; thus the struggle between despots and constitutions had already begun. Catherine of Russia placed herself at the head of the absolutism of Europe, and was then as ever firmly seconded by her faithful ally, Frederic William of Prussia. At this time, as in 1772, the Russians were decidedly victorious over Turkey. The fate of the Ottoman Empire was then in the balance, and for the first time we behold the English ministry awakened to the necessity of rescuing Constantinople from the hands of Russia. Mr. Pitt stirred up the old jealousy between Austria and Prussia, and by his interposition the triumphant legions were stopped in their victorious march. But Mr. Pitt did not discern the intimate connection that there has ever been between Turkey and Poland. He did not see that it was useless to stop the advance of Russia in the south, if she were allowed to proceed unimpeded in the west. He did not see that to rescue Turkey, it was necessary to save Poland. All the calamities of this century might have been avoided, had there been a powerful constitutional monarchy at Warsaw, relying for its independence, not on treaties, but on the impetuous blood of

Sarmatia. And such there might have been. The materials were abundant, they were even taking the form of vitality, when the unscrupulous hand of Catherine rent them asunder, and she gorged her voracious appetite with the remains. The hour of the dismemberment of Turkey has been that of the dismemberment of Poland. As they have fallen together, so ought they to rise together.

We yet feel the effect of Mr. Pitt's great error. He thought the continental sovereigns as disinterested as England in their intentions on taking up arms. The consequences were soon seen. England had scarcely abandoned her neutrality, her troops had not yet joined the allied powers, when Prussia began to make terms for herself with France, and her armies were weakened on the Rhine, that she might get her full share of the spoils on the Vistula. The war against revolutionary France never was a war of alliance. England was the only power heartily earnest in the cause. Prussia, Russia, and Austria had each selfish objects to attain; instead of avenging the crimes of Robespierre and Danton, they were intent on committing crimes of their own. While they were reprobating the annexation of Avignon and the two cities of the Comptat to the French

territories, two of them were eager to annex a great kingdom to their own dominions; and the other, therefore, resolved to indemnify herself by adding the places taken during the war, to her empire. The truth cannot be denied: the monarchs were as bad as the republicans; hence the miseries of Europe; hence the bloodshed, the follies, the crimes of three generations. The lax political morality was indeed epidemical. Napoleon was certainly not worse than Catherine, Frederic William, or Leopold. It is impossible for Englishmen to sympathise with the heartlessness of the sovereigns with whom it was the misfortune of this country to be allied. They were always ready to join France in those rapacious actions which we have been taught to abominate. The secularisation, or in reality, the confiscation, of the ecclesiastical states of Germany, was as shameful an action as any that the most inveterate enemies of kings ever committed. This was the work of Prussia. The most atrocious of Napoleon's deeds was his treachery to Venice, and the division of her possessions. This was perpetrated in conjunction with Austria, who thus acquired the power of oppression in Italy, which has been so well exercised even up to the present day. Who can regret the disasters of Jena and Austerlitz?

We can but be indignant that England was ever the abused ally of such unprincipled powers, and admire at least the abilities of our most determined foe. However great were the sacrifices England made, however enormous was the wealth which she threw broadcast over the Continent, the sovereigns of Europe acted almost invariably as though no such thing as a reciprocal obligation could ever exist. Such has been the treatment which this country has ever received from the governments which arrogate to themselves the exclusive title of the Three Great Powers.

The grief and disappointment of Burke when he saw in what the alliance his eloquence had so powerfully excited was terminating, is well known. His bitter irony against the allies is as frequent as his energetic declamation against the republicans. He saw the future that was impending over Europe. He saw that the madness of governments was as bad as the recklessness of the Jacobins. His last years were saddened, because he was convinced that he had thought better of kings and emperors than they deserved, and the consciousness of the terrible chastisement they would receive, haunted his last hours. Such was the end of all those bright hopes, those eloquent and ardent pic-

tures of society, that lofty and comprehensive wisdom which so highly distinguished this great man. He was right even when his views seemed most erroneous. Had there been any real virtue in the courts to which he appealed, Europe might have been saved, and a great constitutional monarchy established in France, before all the traditions of ancient glory had been forgotten, and all loyalty to the Bourbon dynasty hopelessly extinguished. As it was, the allied sovereigns were never truly respected by Frenchmen, because it was clearly seen that what they wanted to set up in that illustrious nation, was a viceroy of their own. The restoration of a Bourbon dynasty looking for support, not to France but to Russia, Austria, and Prussia, was an impossibility. But this was what was projected, and it consequently failed.

The armies of the despotic monarchs never conquered the French emperor. It was the patriotism, the nationality of the multitude which on being at length roused, drove Napoleon from his throne, and trampled the tricolor in the dust. It must be confessed that if Napoleon overran Europe, if he dictated terms to every continental state, if he violated the laws of nature and of nations, the crimes imputed to

him were shared by at least three of his great antagonists. They made him powerful; they made him an emperor; and had it depended only upon them, he might have been a powerful emperor still.

We now know that all the appeals to patriotism and nationality, made by the allies when they commenced their final struggle against the French emperor, were as insincere as that devotion to the cause of religion and order, so loudly professed in their former manifestoes against the French republic. Like the unfortunate Margaret of Anjou in Shakspeare's Richard the Third, or like the Fates in Greek tragedy, the figure of Poland cannot, by any artifice or crime, be prevented from disturbing the visions of power and dominion in which the tyrants of modern Europe would indulge; and the spectre of a noble nation cowardly murdered haunts them to their doom. We may well tremble when we look back through so many stormy years, and trace the terrible evils which have sprung from that great public crime; and on seeing the retributive punishment which impends over the titled descendants of those who perpetrated that iniquity, we may humbly and piously recognise the justice of Heaven.

As it was the desire to share in the spoils of Poland which first neutralised the forces of the monarchs who fought against the republic of France; so it was the question of Poland which nearly made Russia, Prussia, and Austria disagree while the Congress of Vienna was sitting, and which certainly prevented that pacification of Europe from having any prospect of permanence. How little adversity had taught wisdom to the allies may be seen from one significant fact: even before Napoleon had been vanquished, and while the fortune of war was still doubtful, a secret treaty was signed at Reichenbach between the three Powers by which Poland was divided into three equal parts. But at the Congress of Vienna, it appeared that even the proverbial honesty which freebooters are not shameless enough to disregard when they share the produce of their knavery, did not influence the sovereigns of Russia and Prussia, who deliberately violated their solemn engagement to Austria, and set the treaty at nought. As it was in the beginning, so it was to the end.

CHAP. II.

THE CONGRESS OF VIENNA.

THE conduct of the champions of order and legality at the Congress of Vienna was as selfish and unscrupulous as the worst actions of Napoleon. On whichever side of the map of Europe we may cast our eyes, we shall find reason for amazement at the work of diplomatic wisdom commenced at Vienna in 1814. The great conqueror had been overthrown, legitimacy had at length triumphed, and it was now to be seen how the rights of established governments were to be vindicated.

One great principle, and only one, can be discerned in all the labours of monarchs and their plenipotentiaries at that memorable epoch. It was distinctly proclaimed that might was omnipotent over right; that all international law was abrogated; that the weaker states of Europe were abandoned to the mercy of their stronger neighbours. Monarchical selfishness here reached its climax; an impassible barrier between governments and their subjects was established;

they were understood to have no common interest, no common right. The most important stipulations of the Congress were dictated at the point of the sword by those very sovereigns who had so severely suffered by the sword, and henceforth it was the sword, and the sword only, that was to govern. Nothing could be plainer. Even the proprieties of deliberation were not maintained; the great men who met in Congress thought themselves so far above the rest of mankind that they would not even condescend to be hypocrites. When the Emperor Alexander insisted, in opposition to Austria and England, on appropriating almost the whole of Poland, what reason did he give? "I have three hundred thousand men under arms," he said; and this proved, especially when he was supported by his good friend the King of Prussia, to be a most weighty and sufficient reason. After this, could it be affirmed with truth that Europe had recovered its freedom? Who could rejoice at the overthrow of the military tyrant who was at least a hero and a genius?

Russia did not drive Napoleon from his throne; nor ought she to have been permitted to take the lion's share of his spoils. There was much talk of gratitude for the deliverance of Europe; but there was no gratitude due to the Cossack. In the darkest hour of modern Europe, when

Austria and Prussia were both subjugated, and England alone, with that dogged obstinacy which is so characteristic of the nation, carried on the war, the patriotic Czar was ready to take from Prussia and Austria their acquisitions in Poland. At that terrible moment Russia was the humble ally of France; and only roused herself to resist the French Emperor when it became evident that he was bent on dragging her to his foot-stool. Even then it was not Russia, but Nature and the treachery of his allies, that defeated the conqueror of the world. At the commencement of the French revolutionary war Catherine broke the strength of the alliance by her designs on Poland, and was the cause of their subsequent misfortunes. And, again in the last tremendous conflict on the plains of Waterloo, the Russian legions were far away when the fate of Europe was decided.

But it is certain that gratitude to Russia was the cant of ambassadors at the Congress of Vienna; yet she obtained nothing from gratitude; all that she acquired was by force. For the spoils of Saxony the King of Prussia supported the claims of Alexander; thus the Russian power was established beyond the Vistula, and the independence of Continental Europe was but a name. To every man capable of reflection, to every man who could take long views,

it was as certain as any mathematical demonstration that this settlement was only momentary. The seeds of worse evils were sown by the state physicians who had undertaken to cure the fearful malady which had so long convulsed society.

If one potentate more than another was vitally interested in resisting the claims of Russia to the grand duchy of Warsaw, it was that sovereign who supported them. The King of Prussia was really laying his own dominions open to the Czar, and through them all Germany, by supporting Alexander's pretensions. From that moment the House of Hohenzollern became the vassal of the Romanoffs. Of all countries Prussia is the most completely destitute of natural defences. Whenever hostilities commence on the side of France, her provinces on the left bank of the Rhine must fall into the power of an invader. When she is threatened on the side of Russia, her territory on the right bank of the Vistula must suffer the same fate. Even in a time of peace, Konigsberg belongs in fact more to Russia than to herself. But when the Muscovite dominion was fully established at Warsaw and extended as far as Kalisch, the strong line of natural defence formed by the Vistula was completely broken. Thus Prussia being left absolutely defenceless, is ever compelled

to keep an immense army on a war footing; other powers follow her example, and a heavy draw on the resources of the Continental States is by this means maintained. Though Berlin is situated between the Elbe and the Oder, it is only below Breslau that the Oder offers any obstacle to an invader, and the capital of a great monarchy is almost at the mercy of an enemy from the East.

If the dictates of justice were to be disregarded, if nothing but temporary expediency was to prevail, if Poland was for ever to be extinguished as a nation, it would have been far better for Prussia to have possessed that ancient republic than Russia; for by that means the influence of the Czar over Western Europe might have been securely barred. But such considerations were neglected; Europe was to be delivered, and France and England were to evince their gratitude to Russia in the manner we now witness.

It would seem that the Germans, with their blind confidence in the Czar, never imagined that the day might come when he would be their enemy. Austria is almost as defenceless in her frontier as Prussia. Olmutz in Moravia, and Leopoldstadt in Hungary, are the first fortified places on which an Austrian army

can fall back, in the event of hostilities with Russia. The natural defences indeed, such as the strong mountain range which seems to protect the heart of the Austrian empire, might be an irresistible rampart, when defended by a brave and patriotic people. But alas, that the Machiavellian counsels of the Czar should ever have been listened to, so that even the glorious watchword of Hungary, "Moriamur pro rege nostro Maria Theresa," cannot now be expected to pass from lip to lip when the day of Austrian necessity shall dawn!

Europe may never recover from the effects of that great abandonment of his duty to himself, to Germany, and to Western Europe, of which the King of Prussia was then guilty. The proud and noble German nation was at that time curbed, and we see too well that it has not yet freed itself from the bit. Of Austria it may be said with some truth, that she has too often been the victim of circumstances; but for Prussia there is no excuse. Gross injustice to Poland was indeed poorly compensated by gross injustice to Saxony. Prussia should have looked for allies to the west, and not to the north-east. Those north-eastern winds are ever cold and blighting; while they prevail, the lovely flowers of freedom and civilisation can never thrive.

Russia has been the only gainer in the long rivalry between Austria and Prussia. From this narrow-minded and unworthy antagonism the loss to Germany has been incalculable. When Austria was at length obliged to acquiesce in the dismemberment of Saxony, she anxiously insisted that Dresden should not become a strong fortress, lest her Bohemian frontier might be endangered. This demand the Emperor Alexander thought natural and proper: of course he did; for while apparently securing Austria from Prussia, it weakened the defence of Germany on the Elbe. The more the treaties signed at the Congress of Vienna are examined, the more clearly does it appear that Russia was the only power to which they were an unmixed good.

The policy of Prussia and Austria was most foolish; its injustice was even more reprehensible; the excuses made for the partition of Saxony by the one, and the annexation of Lombardy and Venice by the other, are miserable sophistries. It was said that the King of Saxony had adhered to Napoleon's fortunes, and was consequently to be dealt with as an enemy, as though all the Three Great Powers had not till very lately worshipped the star of the French Emperor, and only deserted him when it was

falling from its sphere; and as though the King of Saxony could be considered a free agent, when his person and his capital were both in Napoleon's power. These apologies for injustice are as insulting to the understanding, as they are shocking to the moral feelings. In plain words, the incorporation of Saxony with Prussia was another partition of Poland, and the junction of Lombardy and Venice with Austria was a still further aggravation of the wrongs done by the treaty of Campo Formio. While industriously subverting all the works of Buonaparte, the high contracting parties at the Congress of Vienna scrupulously took care to imitate his crimes.

France appeared at the Congress as a sorrowing Magdalen. Victory, so long her constant companion, had at length deserted her, and she stood with shame and contrition among the representatives of her foes. But she was France still. Broken, humbled, defeated, dismayed, she was still, and could not be other than, a noble nation. She was more to be respected in her fall, than some of her enemies in their day of triumph. All of them but one had crouched in the dust before her; none of them singly had vanquished her; it had tasked the united efforts of Europe to withstand her; there she stood,

silent, unpitied, exhausted, but with the warm blood still at her heart, the old fire in her eye, and the proud consciousness of undying glory on her brow.

The future now began to be foreshadowed. It is not difficult to discover in the whispered objections France ventured to make to some of the ambitious projects entertained by Russia and Prussia, an approach to the alliance with England which was in succeeding years to be fully established. After the battle of Waterloo, an intimate union of the two Western powers became a great political necessity. The allied governments boasted much about their generosity in allowing France to remain in the condition in which she was in 1789. But her position was not, and could not be, the same as on the eve of the revolution. The whole face of Europe was changed; and the relative position of France had materially altered. It might have been seen clearly that the annihilation of Poland had upset the ancient balance of Europe; and that at this very Congress, it was not our nearest neighbour whom we had most to dread. Even Russia, systematic in everything, was not prepared to consent to the partition of France; for Alexander saw well that the King of Prussia might thus be metamorphosed from a most de-

voted friend into a most formidable adversary. Powerless as France then was, and dependent as was her king on the allied sovereigns, it ought not to be forgotten that she resisted as much as was in her power the injuries done to Saxony, to Genoa, and to Norway.

But it is of England that the patriotic citizens of those much wronged countries have most reason to complain. The individual who conducted our negotiations at Vienna is now no more; the great warrior to whom the triumph of the European despots was principally owing has also departed; the arrangement contemplated by the Congress has been almost in every respect unsettled: it can now serve no purpose either of ministers or of leaders of opposition to conceal the truth. It is then the painful but imperative duty of the historian and the philosopher to declare loudly that the treaties to which the broad seal of England was affixed at the Congress of Vienna, were most dishonourable to the nation, and to the statesman who represented the English Government. These treatises are indeed indefensible: the object which they professed to accomplished was not attained; Europe was not tranquillised; the progress of revolution was not checked; it was even provoked and encouraged by such wicked compacts. How

indeed could it be otherwise? This agreement was in the strictest sense revolutionary; established rights were even more unscrupulously violated than by the Jacobins of 1793; every sentiment of patriotism and nationality was outraged; nothing but the selfish interests of three great monarchies was respected. Even the healing influence of Time, that sooner or later alleviates the injustice inflicted by man, has not rendered the stipulations of the peace less revolting. Turn where we may, the wounds then given are still green; prescription has not sanctified those incongruous unions; the progress of forty years has not made them venerable. The treaties made "In the name of the most holy and undivided Trinity" at Vienna, remain accursed both by God and man.

England had taken no part in either the first or the second partition of Poland; until 1814 her hands were stainless. It was only in the moment of victory, after Providence had blessed her arms with such unparalleled success, that she consented to be the accomplice in evil deeds for the sake of winning the applause of the despotic courts. She gained nothing herself by those measures; but she ought to have prevented them; most certainly she ought not to have co-operated in them. She should even have braved the

menace of Alexander; she should have had the courage, in the cause of justice and humanity, to defy the united legions of Prussia and Russia. Nothing is ever gained by littleness in great affairs. We may depend upon it, that had her voice been earnestly raised against the dismemberment of Saxony, the annihilation of Poland, and the union of Norway with Sweden, backed as the remonstrances of the English monarch must have been by the great English General, at the head of that gallant host which he himself boasted of being able "to go anywhere and do any thing," her appeal would have been listened to, and the great triumph at Waterloo have been surpassed by a still nobler moral victory. To what a height she must then have been exalted among the nations! The world had a right to expect this duty from her; and had her representations been of no avail, if the rights of the weaker were to be so shamefully sacrificed at Vienna, the least to be expected from our government was that it should have perceived that an English diplomatist had no business there.

Yet what after all had England to fear from those hundred thousands of Russian troops on which the Czar so confidently relied? It was England that had supplied Russia with the

sinews of war. The financial resources of Alexander were drained, and had it not been for the seven millions of English gold which he received in the two years of 1814 and 1815, the Russian troops never would have been seen in the plains of Champagne, never would have influenced the decisions of the Congress, never would have threatened the liberties of Europe. But as long as our ministers could pass the army and navy estimates, and induce Parliament to sanction subsidy after subsidy to foreign powers, they thought that they performed all the duties of an enlightened administration. Great men are not always ready when they are wanted. England at that time needed statesmen, and she appeared to have none. The politicians who filled the highest offices of the state had acquired their power from their ostentatious hatred of the Pope and Napoleon. This was then considered the whole duty of a statesman; this comprehended all the qualifications for a ruler of mankind. But these qualifications, such as they might be, were indispensable; and the consequence was, that the indignant wisdom of a Mackintosh, a Brougham, a Horner, a Romilly, was laughed at by the five hundred ardent Protestants who implicitly con-

fided in a Castlereagh, a Liverpool, and a Vansittart.

England has won great battles, founded mighty empires, established a constitutional government such as has never yet been equalled, produced the greatest of dramatists and the greatest of political philosophers; but she has never been able to negotiate successfully a great, advantageous, and glorious peace. Again and again have the acquisitions of her arms been sacrificed through the incompetence of her diplomatists. At the peace of Utrecht, the triumphs of Marlborough were rendered fruitless through the dishonesty of Bolingbroke. At the peace of Paris, the trophies of Chatham were surrendered by the Earl of Bute. And now, at the Congress of Vienna, the political and commercial advantages of England, dearly purchased as they had been by six hundred millions of debt, were abandoned through the weakness and ignorance of Castlereagh. He doubtless meant well; he did not act wrong through any sinister motives; but he was, from the beginning to the end of those important conferences, over-reached by the European sovereigns, and their able but unscrupulous ministers. He believed that they were sincere in their professions. He supposed that they would fulfil the promises they had

made to their subjects. His vanity was flattered by thus meeting on equal terms the great potentates of the world. Their insidious compliments almost turned his head; and during his residence at Vienna, he evidently forgot that he was the minister of a constitutional monarchy. He thus permitted himself to be entangled in schemes which had nothing but despotic selfishness to recommend them; lent the name of England to those immoral treaties by which millions of human beings were disposed of like counters, without the slightest regard to their feelings or interests; and involved this country so deeply with the worst projects of absolutism, that her fair fame was tarnished, and the evils she countenanced incalculable. He never seems to have reflected that disgraceful as some of those arrangements were, they were more disgraceful to the English minister who agreed to them, than to those who projected them, and for the simple reason that he was the minister of a free country, the representative of a nation that boasted of its happy and liberal constitution, the nation that professed to have done so much for the independence and freedom of the world.

The fact that England herself acquired virtually nothing, and lost much by those treaties,

does not make the spectacle of our guilt less odious. England was not even in the elevated situation of the villain who consents to assist in nefarious transactions for a consideration. Lord Castlereagh gloried in the generosity of his country. Since we had taken the office of Paymaster. General for Europe, some of the tempting fields of commerce which we had fairly won might have been opened to us. But Lord Castlereagh was far above such sordid notions. Of commercial matters he knew nothing and cared nothing. It was enough that Napoleon had been vanquished, that the Bourbons were once more placed upon the throne of France, and that the Emperor of Russia was our very good friend.

But if England chose to exhibit herself as an example of disinterestedness, she was at least bound to take care of her allies. Sweden had been faithful to her in great difficulties. When Russia declared war against England, in servile obedience to the commands of Napoleon, she seized upon Finland, as a guarantee of the good intentions of the Court of Stockholm, and positively refused to acknowledge the neutrality of Sweden. Now here was a case, in which, if Lord Castlereagh had had the least claim to statesmanship or ordinary foresight, or had felt in

any degree the obligations of honour, he could not have shrunk from seeing justice done. Sweden, even by the acknowledgments of Prussia and Russia themselves, had deserved well of the allied sovereigns. The least that she had a right to expect from the Congress of Vienna, and especially from England, was that Finland should be again restored to her crown. But her representations were contemptuously disregarded, and that important province of the Baltic, which belonged to Sweden by every law of nature and of nations, by the bonds of race, of religion, of glory, and of prescription, was ceded to Russia. The brave Finlanders were thus given to a master whom they detested, and, as some compensation to Sweden, the British fleet was ignominiously engaged in forcing the equally brave Norwegians from the dominion of Denmark which they loved, that Norway might be given to Sweden in exchange for Finland. By this preposterous arrangement, the position of Russia in the Baltic was strengthened, her less powerful neighbours more than proportionately weakened; and by the acquisition of Finland, she gained a most valuable supply of daring seamen, who at once made her navy a formidable rival to that of England. The Finns, who now man the Russian ships of the line, cannot be

despised even by the stoutest sailors, who are so eager to display their noble qualities amid the angry waves and the narrow channels of the Russian coast. Many of our finest vessels, and the blood of many of their brave defenders, must be sacrificed before Finland can be taken from Russia, and the imbecile blundering of Lord Castlereagh remedied. This minister had the most boundless confidence in the Czar, who so generously permitted us to keep the Ionian Islands. We might take them, and Malta, and be thankful. Lord Castlereagh felt the most lively emotions of gratitude. But the horizon was not altogether free from clouds, even in that halcyon hour. There had been a loud outcry about the wrongs of Saxony and Genoa, from the opposition in the British Parliament. Our allies were offended at such plain speaking; they were indignant that there should be any corner of the earth in which the injustice of their actions could be denounced in open day: Lord Castlereagh had to listen to many serious remonstrances on this subject, and, it was said, condescended to make some humble apologies for this presumptuous freedom of his countrymen. Who could look on such a brilliant constellation of majesty, and remain undazzled? Is it to be wondered at, if the pro-

jector of the expedition to Walcheren began to be somewhat ashamed of being the Foreign Minister of a merely constitutional monarchy? Other ministers were not annoyed by what might be said of them in Parliament. Other ministers were not so much compromised by the blundering answers of their colleagues, that they were obliged to write and tell them not to answer any questions on foreign policy until their return. Other ministers had not to face, on arriving home, the keen criticism of the Whigs who could not be silenced, and whom it was not easy to answer. The blessings of our excellent constitution decidedly appeared more and more questionable to Lord Castlereagh the longer he remained at Vienna, among the distinguished sovereigns and accomplished diplomatists, who decided on the fate of men and nations without hearing a murmur, and by a single stroke of the pen.

Still it was necessary, on his return, for him to take his seat on the ministerial benches of the House of Commons. He courageously met his opponents face to face, and attempted to defend negotiations which really admitted of no defence. Perhaps the most singular specimens of logic and oratory preserved even in the many volumes of Parliamentary Debates

which now threaten to excite the wonder of future ages from their rapidly increasing numbers, are those speeches of Lord Castlereagh in support of the treaties which he had so recently signed. He considered it a sound and conclusive reply to Sir James Mackintosh's moral reprobation of the outrage on Saxony, to declare that "the object was to give Prussia additional force, and increased population was that force." This is the reasoning of plenipotentiaries on the rights of nations; it is not surprising that such logic has resulted in the terrible catastrophes of the last forty years.

But popular leaders are frequently as blind and reckless as the servants of arbitrary sovereigns. Even the members of the opposition did not show themselves much distinguished by political sagacity. In discussing the new boundaries of empires it was France that they kept constantly in view, and it was France that they most professed to fear. If Lord Castlereagh was to blame in trusting too implicitly in the protestations of Alexander, so also were some eminent politicians who believed themselves to be the champions of national freedom. The Whigs of that day were not behind the Tories in their devotion to the Czar. It may perhaps be more correctly said, that the alliance with Russia

received especially the approval of that distinguished section of the Whigs who followed in the footsteps of Charles Fox. They remembered how their favourite statesman had so enthusiastically declared himself in favour of an intimate union with Russia. They remembered the Ocsakow negotiations. They remembered what cordial sympathy there had formerly been between Mr. Fox and the Empress Catherine, who had placed the bust of the English statesman beside those of Cicero and Demosthenes. The views which Burke entertained with regard to the developement of the Russian power were certainly not held by the hereditary leader of the Whig aristocracy. They who look attentively at the aspect of public affairs at the moment when Fox and Burke separated for ever, will find that there was another great political question besides that of the French revolution, on which the opinions of these two men were diametrically opposed. It was at the conclusion of a speech violently in favour of Russia, that Fox first publicly announced his decided disagreement with his old friend on French affairs.

Neither party can make any particular pretensions to political sagacity in discussing the acts of the Congress. To both of them the

future was a blank, or was filled with menacing spectres of French ambition. But as the Holy Alliance took shape, and its designs were seen, a gradual change in the sentiments of both Whigs and Tories began to operate. It was felt that the deliverance of Europe was more apparent than real. It was felt that the "tyranny and despotism" which Lord Castlereagh took credit to himself for having overthrown, still existed, had indeed only changed hands, and had become even more alarming by the change. It was felt, in the language of the poet, that after having struck the lion down, the national life of Europe was abandoned to the foul dominion of the wolf. Even Lord Castlereagh himself at length saw that it was impossible for England any longer to follow implicitly in the wake of her allies. When they declared their hostility to all free institutions which were not voluntarily granted by sovereigns, they only asserted what was in strict accordance with the spirit of those memorable treaties of the great European Congress. But this tendency began now to be plainly discerned. Reluctant as our ministers may have been to confess it, they at last acknowledged that such assemblies of monarchs, settling at their good will and pleasure the different boundaries of kingdoms, annihilating some, por-

tioning others, and coercing every state that could not meet them on equal terms, were directly opposed to every principle of the British Constitution. They set at nought every law which our ancestors struggled so long and so gloriously to establish. They annihilated all real freedom; for no constitution could be called free, which depended on the mere pleasure of the giver.

Such, however, were the ideas of freedom held by the rulers of the world whose names were signed to the treaties of Vienna; and in strict accordance with such ideas were all their provisions framed. It is for this reason that every patriotic Englishman must deeply regret that such stipulations ever received the sanction of an English minister. Had these treaties been strictly adhered to by the other powers, it is difficult to see how the countenance of England could have been withdrawn even from the further proceedings of the arbitrary princes, without a breach of faith. England did not even protest against the Holy Alliance; by the organ of her Government she seemed to sanction its formation. It certainly appeared that the Prince Regent and his advisers fully approved of what they durst not boldly applaud. This state of things could not last. Fortunately for England, the governments who surely counted

on her assistance in all their efforts, soon overstepped all the bounds of moderation, and showed themselves in their true colours. Fortunately for human freedom, there was one English statesman, who though strictly a Conservative, had the wisdom, the genius, and the power to break those shackles which were being so closely forged, and to establish those sound principles of foreign policy which have never since been abandoned.

CHAP. III.

CANNING.—THE CONGRESS OF VERONA.—FRENCH INVASION OF SPAIN.—DESIGNS OF THE HOLY ALLIANCE.—PORTUGAL.—CANNING'S MERITS AS A STATESMAN AND ORATOR.—NEW PRINCIPLES OF FOREIGN POLICY.

THE name of George Canning excites peculiar feelings in the breast of every sensitive student of our parliamentary history. The enthusiasm which the contemplation of his character kindles is something very different from what is generally felt for eminent statesmen. It is more akin to what we experience in perusing a poem or a romance, than what belongs naturally to the stern and calculating political world in which it is the fate of so many great men to live, and toil, and die. The literary man finds in the character of Canning much to sympathise with; for this statesman might have enriched the language with masterpieces of English composition. Ardent, ingenuous, learned, eloquent, accomplished, no mind was ever distinguished by more versatile powers, and no English orator ever so much delighted his audience. Politics with him were

a profession; and as with all professions which are unrecognised, this pursuit of professional statesmanship was by no means so remunerative to its votary as, in his case, it was beneficial to his country. Politics with him were an art; and he suffered the fate of the artist in the bustle of active life surrounded by more worldly and commonplace natures. A greater contrast it would be difficult to imagine than that between Canning and his predecessor in the Foreign Office. Lord Castlereagh was to a ludicrous extent deficient in those intellectual accomplishments which his rival so eminently possessed. But Lord Castlereagh became, through Mr. Canning's infirmity of purpose, the more successful minister; because he applied all the energies of his somewhat contracted intellect to the safe and vulgar routine of official business; and had the gratification of directing, at a most important crisis in the history of the world, the man who, when Foreign Secretary, had declared him incapable of being Minister of War. This was the most signal victory ever gained by mediocrity over genius. Happy would it have been for mankind had it not also been, as unfortunately such triumphs generally are, in the highest degree disastrous to the nation. Happy would it have been had it not in some degree dimmed the lustre of this

brilliant politician's career, which deserves the admiration of all Englishmen. It cannot be denied, that but for Mr. Canning's weakness, Lord Castlereagh might never have been Foreign Minister, and still more certainly never would have represented England at the Congress of Vienna. Mr. Canning might himself have been in the Foreign Office during all the time when it fell to Lord Castlereagh to direct with such unquestioned supremacy the external relations of the country. He might himself have been the English plenipotentiary at Vienna, and have been a powerful means of preventing all the misdeeds of the Congress; and thus, while directly contributing to the welfare of nations and saving the honour of England, have gained for himself immortal glory. He afterwards deeply regretted that he had not had the direction of the foreign policy in 1814 and 1815. He saw that he had lost that golden opportunity which only comes once to statesmen. The "fortunate moment," when it is once allowed to slip away, never returns.

It is easy to imagine the silent indignation with which Canning must have observed some of those public transactions which originated in the Congress, but which he was powerless to remedy. His residence at Lisbon through all that eventful diplomatic period is only too signi-

ficant. He knew not what to do. He was poor; he could scarcely afford to live without office, and yet office could only be obtained by keeping on at least some terms with the friends of Lord Castlereagh. The Foreign Secretary was plainly in power for life; the many great affairs he had directed had given him a complete ascendancy in the administration. Hated by the country, ridiculed by the Whigs, he was absolutely adored by the steady supporters of the government, who voted night after night without asking questions, and comforted themselves with remembering the glories of Waterloo. Canning found it necessary first to absent himself from England, to devote himself afterwards to the Indian Board, and at last to accept the appointment of Governor General. This is the true explanation of that part of Canning's political life from 1814 to 1822; it is impossible to account for his conduct satisfactorily in any other manner.

We might wish to see a man with so many noble qualities act more like a hero; but it is indispensably necessary to paint him as he is. At length the death of Lord Castlereagh unexpectedly released Canning from the fetters which he had allowed to be placed on him, and his emancipated genius at once soared to that lofty height

at which it ever afterwards winged its way. The five years which yet remained to him amply redeemed his fame; and under his auspices England became once more herself.

In justice to Lord Castlereagh it must be acknowledged that he had already objected to the proceedings of the despotic sovereigns, and was gradually becoming more conscious of the real intentions of the Holy Alliance. The moment that the military occupation of France ceased, the ill-sorted union of England with the despotic governments began to dissolve. A constitutional monarchy and the principles of the Holy Alliance were absolutely incompatible. This even Count Ficquelmont admits when he relates, fairly enough, the reasons why the British Government declined acceding to the preliminary protocol of Troppau, which was drawn up by the three courts in order to justify their armed intervention in putting down the Neapolitan revolution. "Such principles," says this author, "never had been those of England;" and he adds, "she resumed her ancient independence, which had always been the foundation of her policy." This is explicit, and requires to be remembered when judgment is passed on the actions of the statesmen who have still more recently had the management of our Foreign Affairs. By the confession of Count

Ficquelmont it is clear that when the same English Minister who signed the Treaties of Vienna was still in office, England was obliged to withdraw from an intimate connection with the three courts. And according also to a most important memorandum of Lord Castlereagh, an alliance of the great military monarchs for the object which was then avowed, "threatened to annihilate the secondary states of Europe."

But Lord Castlereagh went further, and declared that such an object was never contemplated when the alliance was first formed. There can be no doubt that he believed this object was not originally contemplated, but there can be as little doubt that from the first it was the design of the other governments. And this shows how lamentably this minister was deceived when he, even for one moment, allowed himself and his country to countenance the projects of the Holy Alliance. He could never have become the decided opponent of the allies. His protests must ever have been feeble. He admitted the right of Austria to interfere in crushing the revolutionists at Naples, although he refused to adopt the general principles of the Confederacy. But if Austria could interfere by force of arms to destroy the constitution of Naples, according to every rule of logic, France had an equal right

to interfere in overturning the Constitution of Spain, of which that of Naples was acknowledged to be the offspring. It is plain that when once the crusade against Liberalism was begun, it must produce an internecine war between two rival opinions, and could only end in the destruction of every free constitution, and in the abrogation of all international law. It is not improbable that Lord Castlereagh saw the false position in which he was placed, and that the anxiety of his situation preyed upon his mind, and contributed to produce that melancholy termination at once of his political and natural existence, at the moment when he was about to renew his unavailing protest against that tyrannical combination of which he had formerly been the honest, but deceived apologist.

Mr. Canning's return to the Foreign Office ushered in a new state of things. It was the commencement of the political era which extends to the present day. The diplomatists of the Holy Alliance soon had reason to recognise the new spirit which ruled over the foreign policy. The minister could neither be duped nor despised. The necessities of the time were urgent; on the day when he accepted the seals the proceedings of the Alliance demanded his undivided attention.

During his long absence from the Foreign Office, the whole condition of the civilised world had changed. When, after his quarrel with Lord Castlereagh, he left the administration in the September of 1809, Buonaparte was omnipotent on the Continent, threatened Europe with subjugation, and saw his mandates obeyed over the Peninsula; Wellington had not yet disturbed the calculations of the imperial conqueror, and a belief in his invincibility was rapidly becoming prevalent; the Bourbons appeared hopelessly expelled from the soil of France and Spain. Fourteen years big with the fate of empires had rolled on, Wellington had conquered both France and Spain for the Bourbons; the hereditary governments had been restored; and it is indeed instructive to find that the first act of Canning on again becoming Foreign Minister was a refusal to sanction another invasion of Spain by France under her legitimate sovereign, who thus proved, that after all the magniloquent professions in favour of peace, freedom, and independence, the rights of nations were as little respected by the Bourbons and the Three Great Powers as they had been by their immortal enemy. Much as France had suffered by war, much as the aggressive spirit of Napoleon had been condemned, the first army that crossed the French frontiers

after the Restoration was for the purpose of destroying a constitution and of establishing a despotism. This is a curious spectacle for a philosopher. Louis the Eighteenth was always professing his desire to render France exactly what she was when Louis the Sixteenth occupied the throne. But that unfortunate monarch never would have done what his successor thus rashly did; nor, before statesmen had become familiar with those violent acts of power which the successive partitions of Poland, the revolutionary usurpations, and the deeds of the Viennese plenipotentiaries brought into fashion, would such wrongs have been tolerated. Notwithstanding the parade of legitimacy, every thing was revolutionary. Monarchists and republicans, the partisans of order and the partisans of freedom, showed themselves at heart tyrants; and their acts and their professions were subversive of all political morality. On every side the same storm and turbulence meets the saddening gaze. The angry waters were out, and nowhere could the sacred ark of true freedom find a resting place.

It can serve no purpose to dwell on the mistakes and follies of the Neapolitan and Spanish Liberals. Revolutions made by such hands had little chance of being successful; they were men destitute of all the qualities and all the experience

which are indispensable in statesmen. But though their errors and crimes must be reprobated, they were at least as honest and as able as the tyrants who were forced upon them by the bayonets of the Great Powers. When we attempt to justify those violent assaults on the independence of nations for no other object than the lowest selfishness, we are indeed guilty of the highest treason against those moral laws which have done so much for England.

Could the allied sovereigns have had the least compunction or forethought, they would have been warned by the strong remonstrances of the great man who represented England at Verona. It was the Duke of Wellington, the soldier who had delivered Europe, conquered Napoleon, placed the Bourbons on the thrones of France and Spain, and won the independence of the Peninsula, who now protested against the invasion of Spain by the armies of a Bourbon. And yet he was not listened to. His emphatic warning was of no avail. Canning's memorable "come what may," which announced the separation of England for ever from the schemes of the allies, produced no change in their ultimate determination. It only drew the Northern Powers closer together, and made the league of despotism more complete. They had been suc-

cessful in Naples, and were now to be successful in Spain. What cared they for the English constitution? Might not the day come when England herself would feel the power of the Holy Alliance? Had they not virtually declared war against the Parliament of England when they publicly announced that they would acknowledge no constitutions which had not been freely given by Kings to their subjects? Such indeed was the fact. The decree of the National Convention in 1792, by which "fraternity and assistance" were promised to all nations who wished to recover their liberties, was justly considered a declaration of war against every monarchical government. This announcement of the Holy Alliance was as plainly a declaration of war against every constitutional state. The folly of the French Republicans in the days when Jacobinism was rampant, was fully equalled by the folly of the Legitimists in their day of successful reaction.

That England would have suffered the same fate as Naples and Spain, had it not been for the power and energy of her people, cannot be doubted. The allies, even at this time, ventured to interfere with our government. On the appointment of Sir W. A'Court to the post of Ambassador at Madrid, the ministers of the

Great Powers called in a body on Mr. Canning and remonstrated against the choice. This step shows to what our alliance with the despotic courts was tending, and in what, had it not been for the vigour and determination of our statesmen, it must have ended.

The policy which England first adopted in 1822, was really forced upon her; our ministers were obliged to choose between the friendship of her Continental Allies and the blessings of her free constitution. It was plain that both could not exist together. This consideration alone is enough to justify Mr. Canning and the statesmen who have succeeded him; it is enough to answer all the reproaches and the invectives of Count Ficquelmont.

Canning, with his thoroughly English nature, never liked congresses of diplomatists and sovereigns. They are, in fact, monstrosities in politics, and mere convenient apologies for tyranny. At what congress of the sovereigns and statesmen of the Continent were the rights and liberties of nations respected? What congress has not had a secret object different from that which was publicly avowed?

It was at first supposed that the quarrels of Russia and Turkey were to be the prominent topic of deliberation at Verona. But when the

Duke of Wellington arrived in Paris, he found that the projected invasion of Spain was to be the real subject of discussion. It was at that time asserted, and is now beyond dispute, that the Emperor of Russia really encouraged Louis the Eighteenth and his ministers in their designs on Spain. His object was of course to produce dissension between England and France, that he might carry out his plans in Turkey without being confronted by an alliance between the Western Powers. He therefore professed great moderation. He was willing to submit his disputes with the Sultan to the mediation of England. And in the meanwhile he was doing what he could to render our alliance between England and France impossible; for he well knew that England neither could nor would approve of the destruction of the Spanish constitution, and that the more despotic principles were established by the Bourbons in France, and throughout the Peninsula, the more were the sovereigns of these countries dependent upon himself.

He succeeded for a time. The French army advanced into Spain. The Spanish Liberals, who had disregarded the wise and parental advice of the Duke of Wellington, to take away all pretence for foreign interference by making

some changes in their constitution, which could not be altogether defended, were defeated. The Bourbons triumphed; the campaign was eminently successful; and the white flag was once more associated with victory. England had preserved her neutrality; and for taking this pacific course our minister was as much assailed by the Liberals at home, as for refusing to join in support of the invasion, he was condemned by courtiers and emperors abroad. Such is ever the destiny of the statesman who endeavours to avoid extremes and to steer a middle course. Half measures are always unpopular, and they are not seldom unwise. But England could not save the Spanish constitution; despotism for a moment was the rage in Spain; the mistakes of the legislators of Cadiz had been many and ruinous; Canning could only regret what he had not the power to retrieve.

He turned his eyes to South America, and resolved to be beforehand with the French ministers. If France was irresistible in Spain, he determined that the Indies should not fall into her power. The tardy recognition of the independence of the Spanish colonies was not pleasing to the English Liberals. The minister proceeded with every due consideration to the feelings of Spain, and anxiously endeavoured to

prevail on her to acknowledge what was really a fact. It is not surprising, however, that the Spaniards to the last moment resisted the stern necessity of publicly divesting themselves of the brightest jewels of the crown. Step by step Canning proceeded; until at length the national existence of the South American republics was acknowledged by England. That this policy was sound, few men will now deny. It is true that the great things which were once expected from these states have not been accomplished. But it is equally true that Spain never could have permanently kept them under her flag. Had it not been for England, there can be little doubt that before this day they would have been incorporated with the ever-extending territories of the great republic of North America. Cuba, the last and dearest possession of Spain, is more than threatened; and can only be saved from the grasp of the United States by the vigorous interposition of France and England.

Yet there are some few writers on political affairs to whom such considerations are of no weight. A voluminous historian, in the second volume of a work which is now in progress, finds everything to applaud in the French invasion of Spain, and everything to condemn in Canning's recognition of the independence of the

Spanish colonies. After having seen the fate of the Bourbons, and observed the irresistible tendency of human affairs for thirty years, to find an English author who aspires to be a great political authority declaring that this invasion of Spain "was not only a wise measure on the part of the Bourbon government, but fully justifiable on the best principles of international law;"* that "it was a model of energy and moderation," is indeed extraordinary. The fact that such a man exists at the present day must be ranked among intellectual and moral prodigies. To reason with him would of course be hopeless. Certain politicians must be classed among those ingenious inventors who attempt to fly or to walk upon water, and hold up their hands with astonishment and indignation when they find that the law of gravitation continues to act, and that their admirable contrivances, made in opposition to every sound mechanical and natural principle, are of no avail.

Canning was not an unsafe statesman. His foreign policy was as admirable for its wisdom as for its brilliancy. It only appears bold and

* See Alison's History of Europe from the Fall of Napoleon, vol. ii. pp. 736 and 738.

adventurous when compared with the tameness and insufficiency of that which he superseded. England was unaccustomed to see a man of genius, with extended views and a determination of his own, in the Foreign Office; and the popularity of the minister was boundless. But he manfully refused to lend himself to the designs of the extreme Liberals, and powerfully contended for those broad principles of policy which are only worthy of a great and glorious empire. The interest of England was the watchword ever in his mouth; and he followed that interest sincerely and wisely. He loved peace and dreaded the approach of war; because, as he said repeatedly, the next war, whenever it broke out, must be very different from any other contest. He saw that it would be a war of opinion, a war in which hostile principles, and not merely hostile nations, would be arrayed against each other. But though he resisted the people, and even many eminent politicians, when they wished to see England embark once more in war for the indefinite object which was at stake in the Spanish invasion, he boldly looked war in the face when the constitution of our "oldest ally" was menaced, and sent British troops once more to occupy the heights of Lisbon.

It was natural that the success of despotism in Spain should induce the admirers of uncontrolled power to make an attempt on the free constitution of Portugal. But the faith of England was pledged to protect the dominions of the young princess; and the speech made by our Foreign Minister on the King's message must ever be considered as one of the finest oratorical efforts in our parliamentary annals. It was indeed worthy of himself and of the occasion; although the passage so often quoted, and so loudly praised, about "calling the Old World into existence to redress the balance of the New," scarcely deserves the extravagant admiration it has received. His biographers have given that sentence in capital letters, as though the force of language could no further go. But it means nothing. If the balance of freedom against despotism had depended upon the weight of the republics of South America, the liberties of mankind must indeed have been in a hopeless state, and the scale of freedom have kicked the beam. One single province of the United States, inhabited by the Anglo-Saxon race, is, as a counterpoise to despotism, worth all the republics which the ardent orator boasted of having called into existence. The sentiment is hyperbolical, and can only be ex-

cused by supposing that it inadvertently escaped from his lips as he was speaking in reply amid the tumultuous cheers of the House of Commons. The respectable member who afterwards said that on hearing this sentence he could not but look with astonishment at the orator, and doubt the evidence of his senses, might well do so; but perhaps as much from the boldness of the metaphor as from just appreciation.

Such faults are not frequent in the speeches of Canning. His taste was only too fastidious. He naturally shunned violent metaphors and bombastic language. He was the last of that race of great orators which commenced with Chatham. The style of parliamentary debating changed with the reform of the House of Commons; gentlemen began to talk, not to the members in the House, but to the people out of doors. The statesman then remembered that the cheers of his party were not enough; that he must have the people with him; and adapt his arguments to their understandings. He was compelled to indulge in details, and avoid as much as possible the brilliant generalities of former speakers. Hence the age of great orators has departed. Ministers and leaders of opposition all speak to the reporters' gallery, and not to the Speaker's chair, or to the green benches.

The best speech is not that which is delivered with the most effect in the House, but that which reads best in the newspaper of the following morning. Oratory has gained little by this change. Many of the introductory expositions of ministers are elaborate pamphlets; perhaps the hours of deliberation might be shortened, and public business much facilitated, if the prolix development of a particular line of policy were printed before the debate commences, and the form of our legislative proceedings be adapted to the novel circumstances of this reformed generation.

But however interesting this alteration in the style of parliamentary speaking may be to the student of our manners, not much harm is done by adhering to the old forms. A more serious innovation commenced while Canning was Foreign Secretary. If he was the last of great orators, he was also the first of our great statesmen who became so peculiarly obnoxious to foreign governments, that they did not hesitate to set on foot all kinds of intrigues to bring about his dismissal. Of all the evils that can afflict a state, this interference of foreigners in the appointments to the great offices of a national administration is the most terrible, and carries with it the most tremendous consequences.

It ought ever to be jealously guarded against, for the man who countenances it is guilty of the worst of treasons. We may be assured, that however it may be disguised, whatever may be the pretences made for it, at no time and in no circumstances can it ever produce good. This it is imperatively necessary to remember, because it must happen that the minister whose policy is most patriotic, who is least ready to sacrifice any of the interests of his country to gain the applause of other governments, is the most likely to be the object of such insidious manœuvres. The ablest, wisest, and most public-spirited of the statesmen of James the Second's reign, the Earl of Halifax, was the man whom Louis the Fourteenth and his ambassador endeavoured to drive from the English Ministry, because the French king knew that the accomplished nobleman was bent on pursuing a truly national policy, by supporting Holland, and opposing the designs of France. When James the Second parted with Halifax, he dismissed his best counsellor; and the subsequent misfortunes of the Stuarts may be dated from that memorable resignation. After the Revolution, no minister except Bolingbroke ever abandoned the straight and intelligible line of English policy. From that time, French influence was powerless in

Downing Street. Much as Chatham was feared abroad, no foreign minister ventured to pass the limits of his recognised diplomatic duties; and much as George the Second disliked his proud and haughty secretary, he was too honest a man, and hated France too much, ever to listen to Foreign intriguers. George the Third also, with all his faults, was at heart a patriot; and though he was far too much inclined to draw a line between his court and his government, though he was only too ready to accept no ministers but such as were personally agreeable to himself, and were the mere instruments of his individual prepossessions, he never, through any predilection for other sovereigns, thwarted a Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in measures of public policy. The same praise cannot be given to George the Fourth. This sovereign did not hesitate to let France know that Canning was not agreeable to him, and secretly to encourage the French invasion, against which his minister protested, and which he himself publicly condemned. George the Fourth had the baseness to tell Count Marcellus, the French Chargé d'Affaires, privately, that he was unalterably on the same side as M. Chateaubriand and the Bourbons, and that he highly disapproved of the policy of his Ministry. The enlightened King

of England believed that Mr. Canning and the Duke of Wellington were Radicals, because they would not sanction this outrage on national independence. The historian recently quoted, who on this subject servilely copies page after page of M. de Lamartine's Histoire de la Restauration, and whose horror of innovation is so well known, cannot see the impropriety and the danger of the sovereign having one policy, and his ministry another. But this is an innovation perhaps quite as alarming as a Reform Bill. This author might have found that the objectionable nature of such conduct on the part of a monarch, could be illustrated even in the annals of the French Revolution. The double policy of Louis the Fifteenth and his courtiers powerfully contributed, as Burke clearly showed, to bring the French Government into contempt, and to produce the terrible social and political convulsion, about which this writer has compiled so many thousand pages. But it is plain that the unpardonable sin of Canning in the eyes of this enlightened political historian and historical politician is, that he recalled the better days of our history, and did not think it sufficient to follow humbly in the track of the Holy Alliance. This writer adopts that childish and absurd character of Canning, which Count Marcellus derived from George the Fourth and his flat-

terers, and which seemed so true to that select band of French legitimatists, who saw nothing in the aspect of the political world, but the certain signs of an untroubled future for the old monarchy. But he quite forgets to mention the account which Marcellus gives of the British statesman's indignation on perusing the French king's speech to the Chambers, and his memorable prophecy of the results of such infatuated policy. That prophecy has been literally fulfilled. No despatch brought from the archives of diplomacy ever exhibited any minister in a more glorious light than this letter of Marcellus.* Every Englishman must feel proud of the man who had the courage and the wisdom to tell such unquestionable truths to the foolish worshippers of legitimacy, and give to a neighbouring sovereign such an emphatic warning. This epistle also proves how earnest our minister was in his resistance to the French invasion, and how precisely the same were the sentiments he privately expressed to the French plenipotentiary with those he delivered in the British Parliament.

When Canning read that passage of the speech in which it was declared that the just uneasiness of France would be dispelled, if Ferdinand were at liberty to give his people free institutions,

* Politique de la Restauration en 1822-3. Par le Comte de Marcellus, Ancien Ministre Plenipotentiaire.

which could only emanate from himself; in the presence of the astonished Marcellus, who little anticipated the effect such a sentence would produce, he waved the document above his head and gloriously exclaimed, "Miserable axiom! a king free! Do you know of one who deserves to be free? I doubt indeed if he ever ought to be free. Do you think that I should be the minister of George the Fourth if his choice were free? Do you suppose he can forget that I invariably avoided the orgies of his youth—that I always opposed his tastes and his favourites? He hates me for my opposition, for my political attitude, and above all—and here I tell you nothing new—on account of old recollections of his domestic life." And a night's reflection on the imprudence of the king's speech, only made the avowal of the sentiments expressed in this address from the throne to the French Chambers, appear more alarming to the English Secretary of State. On the conversation being renewed the next day, he said deliberately, as he fixed his fine eyes beaming with generous and patriotic enthusiasm on the devout adorer of monarchical authority: "Listen to me: this example may spread even to France. You cannot be ignorant that a deviation from the dogma of legitimacy, almost similar to what occurred in England, is being meditated at this very moment

in France. You know the progress it has made in the ranks of an opposition supposed to be moderate. The head to be crowned is ready."

We have reason to thank Count Marcellus for such revelations. They must increase, if anything could, the veneration with which Canning's memory is regarded. Ministers of state have before now thought it not unworthy of them to say one thing to a foreign ambassador, and another, for the sake of appearances, to the British Parliament. Against such disgraceful conduct it is well that Canning's example should be set off, and that our countrymen, as they pass his statue near Westminster Abbey, should, amid all difficulties and dangers, have assurance that they behold the image of a wise, brave, and conscientious Foreign Secretary.

He died prematurely, and had a mighty nation for his mourners. But he had accomplished that which he had been sent to do. He had bequeathed his example to his followers, and even to his enemies. The race of political vampires, who fatten on corruption, and exult over the graves of brave nations, had shrunk away at the approach of his meridian glory. The iniquities of the Congress of Vienna began to be confessed. As the eyes of the people opened, they asked themselves what they had really gained by their glorious victories, and what sort of men were

those, who in their name professed to make and unmake kingdoms, to barter away the rights of millions, and to subsidise the armies of sovereigns, who mystically proclaimed a crusade against those eternal principles which had made England great and Englishmen free.

But, while heartily doing justice to Canning's great merits, his errors must not be passed over. His intervention in Greece was imprudent. One of the last public acts of his life was to agree to the memorable treaty of the 6th of July 1827, which involved his country in great difficulties. That Canning was outwitted by Russia, when he thus embroiled England with the Porte, the famous despatches of Lieven, Pozzo di Borgo, and Nesselrode, afford indubitable testimony. The generous statesman, who, by his liberal policy, so ably circumvented Russia in the West, fell into the snare which she set for him, and became her tool in the East. The man who gave the death stab to the Holy Alliance, put the Sultan in the power of the Czar.

His sympathies for the struggling Greeks overpowered the foresight of the statesman. But the consequences of this policy were not seen until after Canning was sleeping peacefully in his grave, and other actors occupied the bustling ministerial stage.

CHAP. IV.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON AND THE EARL OF ABERDEEN.—POLICY OF THE WELLINGTON ADMINISTRATION. — RESULT OF THE TREATY OF JULY 6. 1827. — PUBLIC OPINION IN 1829. — THE WHIGS AND TURKEY. — TREATY OF ADRIANOPLE. — THE SECRET CORRESPONDENCE.

FOR some months after Canning's death there was really no government. His friends nominally occupied the great offices of state, and the routine business of each department was transacted; but there was no head of the administration, and the worst effects of this absence of a great responsible chief was soon evident. An English fleet in conjunction with those of Russia and France, sailed into the port of Navarino, and without any declaration of hostilities, destroyed nearly all the effective marine of an ally for whom we had professed the most friendly intentions, and against whom we were certainly not at war. The Turkish navy never recovered the effect of that blow. Of the victory of Navarino, at once unjust and impolitic, England is at this day paying the

penalty. Such was the foreign policy of what, by courtesy, must be called the government of Lord Goderich. Such was the disastrous effect of not having clear and defined objects, when fleets are sent forth to strengthen the remonstrances of the diplomatist.

At home, the want of foresight was as remarkable as in the intervention in Turkish affairs abroad. As soon as the time for the meeting of Parliament approached, and it was absolutely necessary to decide on the measures for the session, the members of the cabinet found out that their only agreement was in a common aversion. Even the Chancellor of the Exchequer was not consulted on the appointment of a committee on finance; he very naturally felt indignant; explanations only showed how little harmony existed among such discordant colleagues; one resignation produced another, and the government was broken up.

The Duke of Wellington then took the office of First Lord of the Treasury. Some of Canning's friends who continued in office were soon compelled to resign, and the Earl of Aberdeen, for the first time, became Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The influence of the Duke of Wellington on the foreign policy of England has been very great; it is from him

that the Earl of Aberdeen avowedly derived those leading principles which have distinguished his ministerial career, and have especially marked his dealings with other nations.

The same writers who delight in describing the policies of Aberdeen and Palmerston as decidedly different, draw the same distinction between the policies of Wellington and Canning. If not correct in their opinions, these critics are at least consistent; but a little consideration will show that the positive difference between the two earlier statesmen was as illusory as that between the two ministers who have so powerfully impressed their character on the European history of the last twenty-six years.

There is not the slightest reason for believing that the Duke of Wellington disapproved of Canning's foreign policy. It was the Duke who was the plenipotentiary at Verona; it was the Duke who went to Russia to negotiate the just interference of the powers between Greece and Turkey; it was the Duke who signed the protocol of St. Petersburg, which settled the grounds of intervention. To suppose that he was the unwilling agent in these important negotiations, and that he secretly disapproved of the memorials to which he deliberately set

his hand and seal, is monstrous. Of all men he was least likely to act the dishonest part of expressing one set of sentiments in public and another in private. He was ever frank and manly in the avowal of his opinions. Conscious of the great position he filled in the eyes of the world, he disdained to use the paltry artifices of the ordinary diplomatist. He never asserted that any measure of foreign policy was the cause of his refusal to take office under Canning. If he and his friends had had such a good excuse for their ungenerous conduct, it would certainly have been made; but that no such good reason was ever given or even hinted at, is a proof that it never existed. He was, in fact, determined to be Prime Minister, and Peel, who was rather jealous of Canning, and had resolved not to serve under him, did all he could to encourage the Duke in his pretensions. Again, when Mr. Huskisson, Lord Dudley, Lord Melbourne and Lord Palmerston retired from the Wellington administration, it was never alleged that any quarrel had arisen on the foreign policy of the cabinet; their resignations were caused by a vote on a domestic question, and by the pride and firmness of the martial Prime Minister, who, after having once found himself secure in his office, thought that he could do without the Canningites, and would

not permit his own ascendancy to be questioned. He was not prepared to be a nominal chief like Lord Liverpool or Lord Goderich. He was determined that Mr. Huskisson should not treat him as he had a few months before treated Mr. Herries. Hence the ministerial advocate of liberal commercial principles found, to his astonishment, that as soon as his resignation was sent in, it was accepted, and that all his humiliating apologies could not induce the Duke to ask him to remain in office. Wellington's decision was not perhaps so wise as it was brave; the expelled ministers were men whom no administration could well spare; but it is only necessary to establish fully that there was not the slightest disagreement on foreign policy when Lord Palmerston resigned the office of Secretary at War, and Lord Aberdeen accepted that of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. Whatever differences there may have been on external policy between the administration of Wellington and that of the succeeding Whig governments, they arose more from the dispositions of the respective statesmen than from any decided principle.

The Duke was emphatically a soldier. His temperament was thoroughly martial. His varied experiences in Ireland, India, and the Peninsula, had made him regard with no

favourable eyes mere popular assemblies. He cared little for human rights; it was enough for him that men had duties. He had not only an English but a European character. A naturalised Spaniard, covered with the orders of the great nations of the Continent, holding a rank in their armies, the personal friend of their sovereigns, the Captain-General of the army of occupation, the acknowledged restorer of legitimate thrones, it is not surprising that his sympathies were on the side of the established monarchies. He looked generally at the means of making governments strong, and thought not much of what was abstractedly just. His great victory was proverbially a king-making victory. His glory was associated with the order of things settled at the Congress of Vienna. Eloquent declamations in favour of human freedom never kindled his enthusiasm. Perhaps he experienced a feeling of contempt for the brilliant orators in the British Parliament, some of whom had done all they could to discourage England from prosecuting the war which he brought to such a glorious termination. Even the "liberty of unlicensed printing," which has been the theme of so many glowing periods, he regarded with no peculiar admiration. He thought of the time when the generals opposed to him learnt all his

plans from the "rascally newspapers" which ministered to the patriotic curiosity of his countrymen, whose battles he was sternly fighting. Of the power of Russia in particular, he felt little jealousy; he believed that a Russian alliance was highly beneficial to England, and frequently expressed much confidence in the wisdom and moderation of the Czar.

This was one side of the Duke's political character. But by itself it would give a very erroneous and extremely unjust view of him as a statesman superintending the foreign policy of England. He was at heart a patriot. That sentiment of duty which was so strong in him, made him spurn the idea of ever separating himself from the true interest of the empire in order to gratify the rulers whom he had so much obliged, and who so highly praised him. Conservative as he was on questions of domestic policy, he became a Liberal when the honour of England abroad was concerned. Like the great English admiral in the time of the Commonwealth, he considered that his first duty was to serve his country whoever might for the moment be at the head of affairs, and whatever might be the form of the government. Like Blake, he would have fought as earnestly against a monarchy as against a republic. The enemies

of England, wherever they might be found, and whatever might be their professed principles, were his enemies. No party politician could say, that the mission he undertook to Verona, under the direction of Canning, was less effectually performed because he was on such good terms with the principal supporters of the Holy Alliance. Nor, though he thought the friendship of Russia worth cultivating, and had even a preference for the Great Northern Power, did he ever lend himself to her designs on Turkey, nor hesitate to declare that it was the interest and the duty of England to oppose such encroachments. We may be well assured that in spite of the blandishments of the present Czar, the remembrance of his friendship with Alexander, and all his Russian prepossessions, had the Duke of Wellington been alive at this day and able to lead the armies of England, he would, at the command of his sovereign, as readily and cheerfully have drawn his sword against Nicholas as he did against Napoleon.

But the great soldier is dead. The most malignant partisans have now no motive for misrepresenting his efforts for the advancement of England. His friendly feelings towards Russia may be admitted without any imputation being cast upon his patriotic integrity. The

eminent man who, under his auspices, became Foreign Minister in 1828, is still alive, to be the mark of all the poisoned arrows which disappointed faction may let fly at his grey hairs.

Since the disruption of the Tory party in consequence of the adoption of free-trade principles by Sir Robert Peel, the Earl of Aberdeen has been peculiarly obnoxious to those politicians who for some years longer professed themselves Protectionists. They knew that this distinguished nobleman was one of the firmest supporters of their former chief. They knew that since Sir Robert's death, the Foreign Secretary of the Peel government was considered as the respected and conscientious adviser of that statesman's political disciples. They knew that though seldom inclined to distinguish himself by displays of oratory in Parliament, Lord Aberdeen's experience, integrity, and judgment were of immense weight in council. It was to him that they ascribed the little confidence which the most influential statesman of their own party placed in the administration of Lord Derby; and, therefore, since he was chosen Prime Minister of the Coalition, he has been singled out for the invectives of the Opposition. Their object was to conciliate Lord Palmerston, whose foreign policy they thought fit to praise most loudly; and

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they began to condemn, in no measured terms, that continental system of which they considered Lord Aberdeen the representative. It is nevertheless a fact, somewhat unfortunate to the sincerity of those Conservative censors of the Prime Minister's foreign policy, but necessary to be remembered by the truthful historian, that it was not until Lord Aberdeen assisted Sir Robert Peel in repealing the Corn Laws, and lost the support of the Protectionists, that they ever raised their voices against his manner of conducting the business of the Foreign Office. It was not until they quarrelled with him on a domestic question that they ever blamed him for his foreign policy, and began to admire that of Lord Palmerston. During the administration of the Duke of Wellington, from 1828 to the November of 1830, and during the administration of Sir Robert Peel from 1841 to 1846, — that is, during all the time when Lord Aberdeen was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, — the vehement partisans on the benches of the Opposition were the most determined supporters and the most enthusiastic admirers of the very minister whom they now reprobate. The extreme Liberals, who always thought Lord Aberdeen too indulgent towards the despotic Sovereigns of the Continent, may, consistently, still continue to oppose him; but it

is not for those who supported Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington now to turn round and denounce Lord Aberdeen for betraying the freedom of nations.

Some of these reproaches are as ignorant and as unscrupulous as they are unjust. It can easily be proved that Lord Aberdeen never had that violent attachment to Russia which has been attributed to him, and that his leaning object while Foreign Minister was to encourage Austria in maintaining her independence of her northern neighbour. Events indeed, have been more powerful than the efforts of the English statesman; but it is due to him to own that while Austria maintained a free course of action, the ambitious schemes of Russia were in some measure frustrated, and the Turkish Empire preserved from direct attack.

He has indeed ever been friendly to an Austrian alliance. It was in Austria that he won a great diplomatic victory, when he induced that country to join the confederacy against Napoleon. All who could judge of the difficulties he overcame at that time, have borne testimony to the able manner in which he conducted that important negotiation. This is not the place to dwell on his career as a diplomatist, or it might easily be shown what good service he did to Austria,

and how natural it was that he should have friendly sympathies with the ablest statesman of that empire. It might even be shown that some of the arbitrary proceedings of the Court of Vienna, which were at once so impolitic and unjust, and which have produced so much misery to Austria and the world, were deeply regretted by Lord Aberdeen, and that he did all he could to prevent them from being adopted.

He never was a Tory of the school of Sidmouth and Perceval. A nobleman of a highly cultivated intellect, distinguished in his youth by a love of literature, his mind enlarged by foreign travel, it is not going too far to say that he heartily despised the cant and bigotry so prevalent in the first quarter of this century, and that there were some very respectable politicians who considered him rather a dangerous Liberal. He never approved of the Holy Alliance. In his place in Parliament he declared, while Lord Castlereagh was still Foreign Minister, that such confederacies of monarchs were to be watched with the greater jealousy, because the system was liable to so much abuse, that it could not be too strongly condemned. On the Roman Catholic question his ideas were still more liberal. He ever proclaimed himself favourable to it, though he thought, most charac-

teristically, that the repeal of the disabilities would not produce all the good which the Whig orators so frequently prophesied. He has the national character of the Scotchman. The Duke of Wellington himself was not more phlegmatic in temperament or less inclined to indulge in any fervid emotions. Lord Aberdeen is not, nor ever was, an orator. Before he was Foreign Secretary he seldom thought of addressing the House of Lords; his talents for debate were never developed as those of many eminent persons have been, in the more exciting atmosphere of the House of Commons. Whenever he thought fit to rise to address the Lords, he uttered a few pregnant sentences in an unpretending manner, with the air of one who spoke from necessity, and delivered his honest and matured sentiments. Few as his words were, they produced an effect; his opinions were always thought deserving of attention.

There is not the slightest reason for supposing that he disapproved of Canning's foreign policy. He did not join in any opposition when the accomplished statesman was First Lord of the Treasury. His conduct at that time was perhaps more upright and intelligible than that of either the "Protestant" ministers who retired from office, or the Whig politicians who ac-

cepted place under Canning. In the only speech he made during this short administration, Lord Aberdeen said, that he belonged to no opposition, "factious or otherwise;" that he had always been in favour of Roman Catholic emancipation; that the only reason why he could not place entire confidence in the Government, was because this measure had not been made a cabinet question; that he thought the manner in which the Whigs who had joined the ministry had agreed to temporise with this great plan of relief which they thought so necessary, was injurious to the fair and honourable character of public men, and that the reputation of our statesmen was of more importance than even the removal of religious disabilities. There are persons so ill-informed and so blinded by party-spirit, as to charge Lord Aberdeen with the disasters of Navarino and the unfortunate results of the war with Russia which so much exhausted the strength of the Ottoman Empire. He acted just the contrary to what is implied in the presumptuous charges of his accusers. He was not in office when the battle of Navarino was decided. The first act of Lord Aberdeen as Foreign Secretary was to aid the Porte, and he was as much attacked by the Opposition of that day for saying that it was our duty to support

the independence of Turkey, as he has lately been accused of being ready to consent to the partition of the Sultan's dominions.

It is forgotten that this violent sympathy for the Turkish cause is of a very recent date. Among Liberal politicians especially, it is only within the last few years that the existence of Turkey has ever been admitted to be a political necessity. The statesmen of the last generation, with perhaps the exception of William Pitt, utterly detested the Turkish Government. Even Burke, with all his eloquent wisdom, his sagacious jealousy of Russia, and his abhorrence of the partition of Poland, hated the Turks as much as he hated Warren Hastings and the Jacobins. He called them a race of savages and worse than savages, and said that any minister who allowed them to be of any weight in the European system, deserved the curses of posterity. It is only since the settlement of Europe in 1815, which so firmly established the power of Russia, and undermined every other throne on the Continent, that the importance of Turkey has been seen. Because we now witness the singular spectacle of the two most enlightened nations of Europe going to war, with the approbation of every sincere and wise friend of freedom and civilisation, for the purpose of keeping the Turks

at Constantinople, the loss of which by the Greeks was four centuries ago considered the most grievous calamity that ever befell Christendom, some sanguine spirits forget how very recently this policy has been decided upon, and are ready to denounce Lord Aberdeen as a traitor for not supporting the policy which he really originated. The readers of some journals will think it an incredible paradox to assert that it was Lord Aberdeen who first as Foreign Secretary proclaimed it to be the duty of England to maintain the independence and the integrity of the Turkish Empire. Nevertheless such is the fact; and a very little reflection will place it beyond dispute.

It is only fair to Burke, and those who until lately execrated the Ottoman rule, to acknowledge that when they called the Turks barbarous, they had many of the vices of barbarians. They were always brave, they were always in a certain sense generous; but they have not often been merciful; and for centuries their yoke has been heavy on the Christians. Even the reforms and ameliorations which have been urged on the government of the Sultan are contrary to the spirit of the Mahometan religion, and the precepts of the Koran. When the Turk becomes a political and religious liberal, he ceases to be a

Turk. He may or he may not develope into something better; but it is certain that on the day he is enlightened into a reformer, after the fashion of English ten-pound electors, the old national heart, that once beat so proudly, must die within him, and that neither the tricolor nor the union-jack in which he may wrap himself, after he has divested himself of the garb and colours of the Prophet, can ever bring him to life again as a genuine Mussulman. In his chrysalis state he may look much more amiable than in his pristine condition. We may consider Abdul Medjid as a friend; we could only look on Mahomet the Second as a foe. The wisdom of Providence has in this, as in other cases, converted what was regarded as a curse into a blessing. If, when Constantinople fell, many earnest Christians wept over it as over the fall of a second Jerusalem, the healing influence of time has done much for Europe; and there can be no doubt that we should now with as much reason regret the fall of Constantinople into the hands of the Cossack, as our ancestors formerly bewailed its possession by the Turk. True policy teaches us to put up with the evils we have been accustomed to, rather than blindly to rush into those we have not experienced. The Turkish yoke is now at least endurable; but we

must not forget that if statesmen in former days would not tolerate it, it is only in our time that it has become tolerable.

Thirty years ago this revolution in the Turkish Empire had begun. The work of innovation was, however, still rude and unfashioned. English Liberals would not believe in it; instead of regenerating Turkey, they were bent on raising another nation of real old Greek heroes from the soil of the Peloponnesus. Thus were the wrongs of Europe to be redressed; the age of Pericles was to be revived; we were in this nineteenth century to behold the glories of a liberal Athens with her warriors, statesmen, and philosophers. These were the visions of many Englishmen; but they were not the visions of the Emperor of Russia. The English Whigs and the Czar were both bent on wresting Greece from Turkey, and doing all the harm they could to the Sultan. An English Liberal is the most credulous of politicians. The manner in which the Emperor Nicholas made use of the democratic fervour of our countrymen for the purpose of striking a deadly blow at Turkey, is marvellous. Blind and unreflecting, we never calculated consequences, or looked to the future. The Treaty of July, 1827, by which the interference of the Three Powers was decided, was, as events

proved, extremely impolitic. Had Canning lived to superintend the operations of the Allies, the result might have been different; but as it was, it produced the battle of Navarino.

For six years the hostilities between the Turks and the Greeks had continued. For six years the Great Powers had professed their neutrality. For six years Russia anxiously watched her opportunity, and almost believed that the dissolution of the Ottoman Empire was at hand. She knew well that if the Greeks achieved their independence without the aid of France or England, as long as the Turks remained in Europe that independence would be merely nominal; that a kingdom of Greece would be entirely dependent upon herself, and that a Greek state would be a powerful lever by which all the Greek brethren in Turkey might be moved at will, and the Turkish Empire demolished at any moment. To the surprise of Nicholas, and to the dismay of the Whigs in England, Greek patriotism showed itself at length not so powerful as they supposed; the energy of the Turkish commanders was gradually subduing the insurgents, and the authority of the Sultan was once more being recognised throughout the Morea. Professions of neutrality were immediately thrown to the winds. The Czar determined to interfere,

and he would have been glad to have interfered alone. This could not be done without hazarding a rupture with England. The Duke of Wellington's influence prevailed, and a common intervention was agreed upon, especially for the purpose of preserving peace. In the name of peace the Three Powers made war on a friendly state, destroyed its armaments, and insisted upon the withdrawal of its garrisons. But this was not all. When the Turkish armies had become victorious in all parts of the Morea, after the Greek armies had been defeated, Missolonghi and Athens taken, and the Crescent was everywhere triumphant, the allied fleets arrived at the scene of action, and checked the operations of the Turkish commanders. The object for which the governments professed to interfere was not accomplished; for instead of peace being preserved, as soon as Nicholas saw what a loss the Turks had sustained, he hastily separated himself from the other mediating powers, and a disastrous war with Russia followed the disastrous battle of Navarino.

As we now look calmly at that naval conflict, we are shocked at the injustice and the hypocrisy of the allies. We sympathise fully with that sentence in the King's speech which declared it

an "untoward event." Neither the Government of France nor of England really approved of the victory which their fleets had gained; and by all sagacious politicians the result was deeply regretted.

But the English Opposition thought very differently. They were indignant that the Duke of Wellington should have considered the affair of Navarino as untoward; they were indignant that Turkey should have been called an ancient ally; Sultan Mahmoud was classed in their declamations with the tyrants of the Continent; and they bitterly reproached the ministers for declaring that it was necessary to maintain the Turkish Empire. At the meeting of Parliament in 1828, Lord Holland, who always spoke with much dogmatism on foreign affairs, could scarcely find words to express his horror at any expression of sympathy for the Ottoman Empire, and enthusiastically defended the battle of Navarino. The Liberal members of the House of Commons went quite as far as the Whig peers in their detestation of Turkey, and in their want of sympathy for her wrongs. Mr. Brougham declared that the battle of Navarino was a glorious, a brilliant, a decisive, an immortal achievement; and even Lord John Russell thought it as honest

a victory as had ever been gained from the beginning of the world.

The success of Russia in the campaign of 1829, did not in the slightest degree alarm the illustrious politicians of the Opposition, nor induce them to soften their hatred to Turkey. The more it became necessary to put a stop to the progress of Russia, the more the Whigs condemned Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Wellington for endeavouring to save the Ottoman Empire. The ministers were far from pleased at the consequences of the policy which they inherited. The Duke said that it was Canning who had settled the basis of our interference with Greece; but when he or his colleagues ventured at any time to doubt of its wisdom, Lord Holland accused them of not sympathising with liberal opinions, and of wishing to see the triumph of despotism.

At the beginning of the session of 1830, when the feebleness of Turkey and the ambition of Russia had been so plainly demonstrated, even Lord Holland, had he deserved the title of a statesman, might have been expected to see whose game he was playing. The people had taken the alarm as soon as the news arrived that the line of the Balkan had been forced, and that a Russian army was marching on Adrianople.

Rumours of strange import had also been spread abroad. It was whispered that a secret compact had been concluded between the King of France and the Emperor of Russia, by which the Bourbons were to extend their dominions to the Rhine, and Nicholas to occupy Constantinople.

It was at such a momentous crisis that our legislators assembled for the parliamentary season. Even then the eyes of Lord Holland and the Whigs were not opened. This nobleman attacked Lord Aberdeen, not for destroying but for saving Turkey; not for persuading the Sultan to agree to the treaty of Adrianople, but for not permitting the Czar to take all the Turkish Empire. "As a citizen of the world," said Lord Holland, "I am sorry that the Russians have not taken Constantinople." The Duke of Wellington expressed himself strongly on the importance and the duty of upholding Turkey; and Lord Aberdeen reminded Lord Holland that Mr. Fox had also been of the same opinion. The Whigs were angry with the Foreign Secretary for asserting that their favourite leader ever thought of opposing the designs of Russia or of supporting Turkey. Lord Holland in the House of Lords, and Lord John Russell in the House of Commons, both pointedly denied that Mr. Fox ever held such a notion.

When such were the ideas of the principal statesmen of the Opposition, it is too much now for writers to turn round and blame Lord Aberdeen for having been the friend of the Czar. The Russians had almost reached the suburbs of Constantinople; the Turks had neither a fleet nor an army to oppose to the hosts of Nicholas; their strongest fortresses were occupied by Russian garrisons; the Ottoman Empire was on the verge of ruin; instead of wondering that Turkey lost so much by the treaty of Adrianople, we may be thankful that she did not lose her all. The past must not be judged by the present. We are now unanimous on the justice of the war against Russia, and in favour of Turkey. But had Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Wellington declared war in 1829 in defence of Turkey, they would have been strongly opposed by a more formidable section of liberal politicians than ever resisted Pitt when he commenced hostilities against the French republicans. Yet with public opinion but partially in their favour, the ministers courageously contemplated hostilities. It is indisputable that the administration of the Duke of Wellington never would have permitted the Russian battalions to enter Constantinople; that they had come to an agreement with Austria to oppose the advance of the Czar, and that they

had ordered the English admiral, if all means of pacification failed, to seize the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean. This they did in the face of the Opposition. This they did when religious fanaticism, popular prejudices, and liberal enthusiasm were all against the cause of the Sultan. It is therefore not without reason that Lord Aberdeen lately put in his claim to have written and done as much in opposition to Russia as any English statesman.

It may be true that the Russian troops that had reached Adrianople were in a critical position. It may be true, as facts which have since been brought to light seem to indicate, that even the invading army was much weaker than it was believed to be, and that it was suffering severely from privation and disease. But peace was absolutely necessary at that time for Turkey. Had the war continued two or three years longer, even though the Turks had been able to meet the Russians in the field, the Ottoman Empire must have fallen to pieces. It was completely exhausted. The long struggle with Greece, the innovations in the administration, the destruction of the janissaries, the anarchy and discontent of the provinces, the loss of the fleet at Navarino, the blockade of the Dardanelles, the fall of the great fortresses both in European and Asiatic

Turkey, the defeat of every army with the exception of a single force of about twenty thousand men under the command of a disobedient pasha, had produced a state of almost hopeless weakness and absolute prostration. The Russian armies were flushed with victory; however great their losses they could have been easily repaired; and with the command of the Black Sea, Varna, and the eastern passes of the Balkan, it is scarcely possible to imagine any obstacle to the certain triumph of Nicholas. The power of Austria was indeed great, but it was counterbalanced by that of France; England was not in such a condition to engage in a great war as she now is; and the strength even of the Turks themselves has since been recruited.

With Prussia and France favourable to Russia, how could Lord Aberdeen have acted otherwise than he did? His hands were tied behind him. As it was, Russia acquired by the treaty of Adrianople no extension of her dominions in Europe, with the exception of the islands at the mouth of the Danube. It is true that this was an acquisition which gave to Russia a control over the commercial interests of Germany, and indeed of all Europe. But if Prince Metternich, the Austrian Minister who has ever been so jealous of the approach of Russia to Constanti-

nople, who attempted to induce all Europe to join in an alliance in support of Turkey, and whose policy it has been systematically to oppose the aggrandisement of Russia, permitted the Czar to obtain the mouths of the Danube, Lord Aberdeen cannot very well be blamed for submitting to a necessity which he was powerless to resist. People write and speak now, as though our ministers, without going to war, could have made Russia, in that moment of victory, accept any terms they might have been pleased to prescribe.

When it is considered in what a miserable condition Turkey then was, how divided and hostile were all the nations of Europe, we may well wonder that Russia gained so little as she did by this much vilified treaty. It was not the Treaty of Adrianople which gave her the command of the Black Sea. It was not the Treaty of Adrianople which gave her the pretence of interfering with the Greek subjects of the Porte. To those who say that Russia ought to have accepted pecuniary compensation, and no increase of territory, it is sufficient to answer, that it is not what Russia ought, but what she would under the circumstances accept, that Lord Aberdeen had to consider. As it was, the extension of her limits was comparatively

small; and the money which the Sultan agreed to pay was beyond his resources. He was obliged afterwards to compound for a release from part of his pecuniary engagements by ceding some portion of his Asiatic possessions. If England had been prepared to declare war in the event of her pacific proposals being rejected, of course the question would now assume a very different form. But as peace at any price was then the cry of the Opposition; as a war for Turkey would have been anything but a popular war; as the Czar was omnipotent, and other great European powers his humble admirers, no impartial person, who fairly weighs all the difficulties of that time, can conscientiously declare that Lord Aberdeen did wrong in acquiescing in the Treaty of Adrianople. Those who eagerly demanded the independence of Greece, and insisted on the treaty of 1827, and not the unfortunate minister whose lot it was to attempt to remedy the injuries which that policy inflicted upon Turkey, are justly censurable.

Mr. Canning did not foresee, when he agreed to that treaty, the troubles he was preparing for future governments, and the serious misfortunes impending over the Ottoman Empire Instead of preventing, it produced war, and afforded the

pretext for other wars. It almost ruined Turkey. It tasked the ability and patience of successive foreign secretaries, and after years of negotiation, the freedom of Greece was not securely established, anarchy and civil war existed, and the ministers of France, Russia, and England had not arrived at a definite conclusion.

The fact must now be admitted, that the policy of Canning so far as it had reference to the affairs of Greece and Turkey, was gravely erroneous. Russia never supposed that peace would be the result of the intervention of the three Powers in the struggle between the Porte and the Greeks of the Peloponnesus. The Russian minister deliberately acceded to a protocol which, while professing to maintain peace, he knew would be the cause of war.

The Secret Correspondence places this matter beyond dispute. These despatches, said to have been taken from the archives of Warsaw, are unquestionably genuine. Neither Lord Aberdeen nor Lord Palmerston, men surely capable of forming a sound opinion on the subject, have ever suspected them to be false. It is utterly impossible that such documents, so full of the individuality of the various ministers to whom they were ascribed, and so luminiously revealing the policies of the European cabinets, could be

manufactured. They have the natural impress of truth. They treat familiarly of questions which none but those initiated into the mysteries of diplomacy, and thoroughly masters of the subject, could know. Had they been deceptions, a minister of any Court of Europe, or any one having access to the Foreign Office of England, could easily have proved them to be deceptions. That this has not been done, that they have repeatedly been quoted as authorities by leading politicians in Parliament, ought to convince even the most sceptical of understandings. One effect, indeed, which they should have had, they do not seem to have produced. As they incontestably proved that a Russian Ambassador was a systematic impostor; that he did not hesitate to state deliberately that which he knew to be directly at variance with truth, to quiet the apprehensions of the court to which he was sent, it is surprising how ministers have, for many years after the publication of these letters, trusted to the professions of the Emperor Nicholas, and unhesitatingly declared their confidence in his friendly intentions towards Turkey and the whole world.

From 1826 to 1830, the more the integrity and independence of the Turkish Empire was threatened by the Emperor, the more did his

servants in Austria and England declare that the integrity and independence of Turkey was an object which he had sincerely at heart. The more resolutely war was made by the Russian generals, the more pacific were the declarations of the Russian ambassadors. If the forces of the Czar had entered Constantinople, there can be no doubt that the news of the occupation of that city would have reached Vienna and London a very short while after Count Krasinsky and Count Lieven had distinctly assured Prince Metternich and Lord Aberdeen that the troops of the disinterested and generous Emperor of Russia never had the slightest intention of intruding into the Sultan's capital, and that orders to retreat across the Danube had positively been sent to General Diebitsch from St. Petersburg. If the news had been thoroughly authenticated, and explanations had been demanded, the Russian ambassador with a grave face would certainly have maintained that it had happened by mistake, and by mistake it would have been positively announced that Nicholas had himself awoke one fine morning and found himself in Constantinople. The game of deceit would still have been continued. This occupation of the metropolis of the Greek Empire would have been represented as only temporary: years, however, would have

elapsed, bale after bale of despatches would have been written, lie after lie would have been told; and at length the Grand Duke Constantine, with the title of a Greek Emperor, would have been left on the shores of the Bosphorus as his father's viceroy.

A careful perusal of a despatch of Count Lieven to Canning, clearly establishes that the only inducement for Russia to act with France and England was the hope that the Western Powers would be obliged to make common cause with her against Turkey. War, not peace, despotic selfishness, and not sympathy for an oppressed people, were the motives which Russia entertained. The military reforms which the Sultan had energetically carried out, had given the greatest alarm to Russia, and whatever might be the violations of the conventions of Ackermann, and the alleged injuries which Russian subjects had received, it was for the purpose of destroying, as Count Pozzo di Borgo plainly says, that physical and moral organisation which was in progress throughout the Turkish Empire, and which had never before been witnessed, that determined the Emperor upon war.* It was necessary that a vital at-

* Count Pozzo di Borgo to Count Nesselrode, Nov. 28. 1828.

tack should be made, while the work of innovation was yet crude, and the strength of the new system still immature. Count Lieven, even ventured, among other questions, to ask Canning, before the treaty of July the 6th was concluded, what would be the conduct of England, should the Sultan refuse to comply with the terms proposed by the mediating powers?* The English minister, in a secret and confidential answer to this communication, passed by this important point, as one which he thought it "not essential to dwell upon." This was unwise. The contingency ought to have been foreseen, and distinctly provided for, before the treaty was irrevocably settled. In such important negotiations, nothing ought to be left to chance. Although they were pledged to act together, the English and Russian ministers had very opposite designs. What Canning innocently calls "a work of conciliation and peace," Count Nesselrode, with more sagacity, pronounces in this correspondence, to be "a crisis which must decide the future relations of Russia with the Ottoman Government."† Every measure which England took for the emancipation of Greece was impatiently welcomed by

* Despatch of Nov. 7. 1826.

† Despatch of Nov. $\frac{15}{27}$. 1826.

the Russian statesman, who expressly says, that his object was to place England in a position from which she could not possibly retreat. We may well be surprised at the infatuation of our ministers, when they suffered themselves to be entangled in such designs. Prince Metternich distinctly declared, that the reason why he would not join in the treaty for securing the independence of Greece was, because he plainly foresaw that war would be the result. The battle of Navarino soon confirmed the sagacious prognostications of the Austrian statesman. He exerted himself indefatigably in the cause of the Sultan, and could he have prevailed upon the other powers, the Turkish Empire would, even before the Treaty of Adrianople, have been placed under a general European guarantee. He positively declared to the Courts of France and England, that he would sign no more treaties between Russia and Turkey, "which are nothing more than hollow truces, and leave in them the seeds of new dissensions and new wars."*

How came it then, that the intention of Prince Metternich was frustrated, and that Russia

* These are his own words as they are reported by Count Pozzo di Borgo to Count Nesselrode. (Secret Despatch of December 14. 1828.)

triumphantly succeeded, both in war and in negotiation? How came it, that the Treaty of Adrianople, with so many clauses which can only be construed as fatal to the independence of Turkey, and injurious to all the interests of Europe, was signed? The answer is, that the Treaty of Adrianople must be laid at the doors of France, and Prussia, and the English Opposition. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen fully shared in the apprehensions of Prince Metternich; every despatch in the secret correspondence proves that they were not deceived, that their eyes were opened to the treachery, duplicity, and ambition of Russia, and that they would have been ready to join in a general Congress, to give effect to the project of the Austrian chancellor. The English ministers have no reason to regret the publication of those diplomatic curiosities. So far from offering the least evidence of connivance with Russia, these papers show how decidedly they were opposed to the Czar and his clever agents. One of the finest tributes any statesman ever received to his honesty, sagacity, and patriotism is given to the Duke of Wellington by Pozzo di Borgo, in the most valuable of all those secret despatches. The artful diplomatist never supposed that the Duke would see this composition; but it is at the

present time peculiarly deserving of attention. It proves incontestably what the Duke's real opinions were, how little his friendship for the Russian Emperor influenced his judgment as an English statesman, and how his sterling honesty and straightforward earnestness, backed by his great military fame, awed even the most dexterous of Russian intriguers.*

* "Our present situation will be appreciated with *all its advantages.* The sacrifices we have made in order to obtain them, although considerable, are by no means disproportionate with the results; and the magnitude of our resources displays itself still in a formidable manner to those even who are most disposed to question them. Those truths, M. le Comte, are evident to the French Government, which has never mistaken them; and to just and impartial persons in this country. I will even add, from information I have acquired, that they are equally so to the Duke of Wellington. This great soldier has never drawn serious consequences from accidental successes, and from the unexpected resistance of the Turks. He has given to each event its degree of importance, and has carefully avoided exaggerating its effects. From the moment that he became aware of the number of imperial troops that had passed the Danube, he no longer, it is true, expected decisive results; but he was perfectly sensible that the relative superiority would remain to our arms, and that discipline would triumph over enthusiasm. It is this conviction which makes him foresee the probability and the almost certainty of a new campaign, and makes him apprehend the most disastrous consequences to the Ottoman Empire; because he thinks, with reason, that experience will point to us the precautions we must take, and that the Emperor has the means of preventing any from

Far different, however, is the light in which the leaders of the Opposition appear to Count Lieven and Pozzo di Borgo. The Russian diplomatists chuckled, as they well might, when they saw the eminent champions of human freedom lend themselves blindly to the worst schemes of the tyrannical Emperor of Russia. It was not merely the existence of Turkey against which the Russian arms were directed. The object was even much greater. It was nothing less than to place the whole of Europe, and especially the freedom of the Western States, at the mercy of the Czar. This is not the assertion of a frantic visionary led astray by his vanity and enthusiasm. Pozzo di Borgo himself, the cunning and calculating diplomatist, positively acknowledges to Count Nesselrode in his correspondence from Paris before the campaign of 1829 had begun, that the war was for the purpose

being neglected. I have acquired this information in a positive manner from the Prince de Polignac, who has just arrived from London, and who has communicated it to the King and his Ministers; and I am the more disposed to place faith in it, because it is in harmony with that innate sagacity which I have always found the Duke to possess whenever he was called upon to exercise his judgment upon questions relating to a profession in which he has excelled in such a transcendent manner." — Secret Despatch from Count Pozzo di Borgo. Dated Paris, 28th Nov. 1828.

"of confirming the influence of Russia on the internal and external repose of the rest of Europe." How might those enlightened English Liberals, who reprobated all the deeds of the Holy Alliance, have been expected to act in such a great European crisis? The secret correspondence indicates with what eagerness the debates in the English Parliament were read in Russia, and what pleasure it gave to Count Nesselrode and the Emperor Nicholas to find that their policy did not want defenders, as Count Lieven assures them, amongst the most distinguished members of both Houses. Mr. Brougham's vehement declamation against the barbarism of Turkey; Sir James Mackintosh's observations on "the danger of any guarantee in favour of the Ottoman Territory"; and Lord Palmerston's warning against an "Austro-Turkish policy," were all immediately reported to St. Petersburg, and received with the greatest delight by the highest personages in the Russian Government. The Emperor of Russia, in return, favoured his ambassadors with imperial criticisms on the different specimens of English rhetoric which had been sent for his perusal. After studying the first of Lord Palmerston's speeches on the affairs of Portugal, in which he said that it was altogether out of the question

that England should go to war in defence of the Sultan, and that an Austrian Alliance for maintaining the independence of Turkey was not advisable, the Emperor Nicholas informed Count Lieven of the gratification which the study of that speech had given him, and declared that Lord Palmerston must be regarded as one of the greatest of English orators. The criticism was certainly just. But how far the sentiments it expressed, coinciding as these particular passages did exactly with the Emperor's own opinions, assisted his appreciation of the speech, and whether or not His Imperial Majesty's admiration of Lord Palmerston's eloquence has continued up to the present time, there are not yet means of ascertaining. Should the archives of St. Petersburg, however, one day suffer the same fate as those of Warsaw, and their contents be disclosed to the English public, there can be no doubt that they will afford an edifying example of political toleration. In Austria, a Liberal is sure to be ranked as an enemy. But as long as they are subservient to his ambitious intents, enthusiasts of every description, politicians of the most opposite principles, Sir James Mackintosh and Count Ficquelmont, M. Chateaubriand and Mr. Cobden, have the impartial and cosmo-

politan applause of the orthodox Defender of the Greek Faith.

The future historian will some day have to record what an important part the Peace Society has played on the breaking out of the great war for the security of Europe. The Emperor of Russia trusted to the orations of the fanatical votaries of peace in 1853, as he formerly trusted to the speeches of the Opposition when he dictated the Treaty of Adrianople. Experience, the surest of guides in political affairs, had taught him that in 1829 the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen, with their eyes open to the consequences of the unfortunate treaty, had been obliged to acquiesce in it; and that even Sir Robert Gordon, the brother of the English Foreign Secretary, had advised the Sultan to accept those hard conditions of peace rather than continue a ruinous war. How could the Northern Autocrat expect that the result would have been different in the present day? Were not some of the members of the Peace Society as influential politicians as the noble lords and honourable gentlemen who scouted the idea of defending Turkey twenty-six years ago? Had they not spoken the sense of their countrymen in the great national struggle against monopoly so that even the great and powerful government

of Sir Robert Peel had been unable to offer a successful resistance to the popular agitators? Were not the blessings of peace as obvious to the multitude as those of cheap bread? Could it be anticipated that Mr. Cobden, so omnipotent in his advocacy of one cause, would be so powerless in another? Were not the principal governments of the Continent as friendly to Russia in 1853 as in 1829? In 1829 there was the able Minister of Austria prepared to offer a determined opposition to the attack on Turkey, and the Austrian Empire was then powerful and independent; but in 1853, with Austria almost a dependency of Russia, and her politicians bitterly hostile to England, the greatest obstacle to the subjugation of the Sultan was removed. And what was there to fear from the rest of Europe? What chance was there of any successful combination against Russia? Prussia was at this time, as in 1829, the ally and friend of the Czar. A Napoleon had just ascended the throne of France; the just apprehensions of England had been excited; the English newspapers were almost unanimously reprobating in the most unmeasured terms the new ruler of France, and even Cabinet Ministers on the hustings had given free utterance to the same sentiments. What probability was there that

an alliance between France and England, which for twenty years had prevented the hollow truce between Russia and Turkey from being ostensibly disturbed, could again be cemented under a Napoleon? The English ministers would doubtless protest against another invasion of Turkey; but did not Lord Aberdeen himself vigorously protest against the Treaty of Adrianople without war having followed?

This parallel between the state of Europe in 1829, and that at the moment when Prince Menschikoff went on his celebrated mission to Constantinople, which heralded the present war, may show that there was nothing so wild and imprudent in the recent attempt on the Ottoman Empire as has been represented. Appearances were decidedly in favour of Russia. The moment was well chosen. None who fairly consider the circumstances of the two epochs of 1829 and 1853, will venture to affirm that there was much probability of a great European war in defence of Turkey, after so many years of peace, and so much passive submission to Russian aggression. This was not the act of a mad emperor; there was much method in such madness.

The Peace Society must be blamed for the present war, as the Whigs, and not Lord Aber-

deen, must be blamed for the Treaty of Adrianople. Had the Opposition of that day been as conscious as the Ministers of the danger attending Russian aggression, had the people been then as unanimous for war as they were for preserving peace, had the Liberals been as enthusiastic for the Turks as they were for the Greeks, the Government might have cordially joined with Austria, and have defied the Russian power. But to menace war, while resolved at all hazards to maintain peace, to provoke danger, and then to sneak out of it, would have been utterly unworthy of any English ministry, and especially of an administration in which the Duke of Wellington was prime minister. The degree of ignorance which has prevailed on the negotiations of 1829, and on all the circumstances relating to the Eastern question, is really astonishing. Eminent politicians in the House of Commons, who have been regarded as authorities on foreign policy, have spoken of Lord Aberdeen as the maker of the very treaty against which he protested. The minister who has been accused of being in league with the Emperor of Russia, was, in fact, far beyond his age, when in 1829 he saw the imperative necessity of resisting all encroachment upon Turkey.*

* The author may be pardoned for stating that this chap-

ter was written some months before the Treaty of Adrianople was directly referred to by Lord Lyndhurst in the House of Lords, and also before the despatch of Lord Aberdeen to Lord Heytesbury was published. It is scarcely necessary to add how much that remarkable despatch confirms the accuracy and justice of the opinions here expressed. It is the ablest and most conclusive exposure of the systematic aggression of Russia ever drawn up by an English minister. It also plainly states the most unpalatable truths to the Russian Government which were ever addressed from one power to another without being followed by a declaration of war. Of the many volumes that have been written on the policy of Russia, this brief composition of Lord Aberdeen is by far the most valuable. But this statesman never does justice to himself when he speaks in Parliament. Even in his explanation of the 6th July, he did not put forth half the strength of his case. If all the circumstances of 1829, and the prevailing opinions of politicians were considered, the wisdom and foresight of the Minister must be acknowledged by every candid person. For the credit of English gentlemen, it is to be hoped that the public have heard the last repetition of those scandalous charges of "connivance" which have been so readily bandied about, without the least regard to common fairness, common candour, or common sense.

CHAP. V.

THE AFFAIRS OF GREECE. — NEUTRALITY OF LORD ABERDEEN IN THE CIVIL WAR OF PORTUGAL. — STATE OF EUROPE IN 1830. — RECOGNITION OF LOUIS PHILIPPE AS KING OF THE FRENCH. — FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT.

THE establishment of the kingdom of Greece was the most arduous business of Lord Aberdeen while he continued Foreign Secretary in the ministry of the Duke of Wellington. The Emperor of Russia, as our ministers soon found, never had any intention of making Greece an independent and powerful state. He opposed the extension of the frontier. He watched jealously any symptoms which it gave of national life. He would rather permit the Sultan to remain at Constantinople than see a real Byzantine empire take the place of the Ottoman rule. His policy it has ever been to prevent the growth of a sound political organisation in any part of the Turkish dominions, which he regards, whatever professions he may make, as naturally his by inheritance. He considers himself as the

guardian of Turkey; if not his own possession, he believes it to belong by right to his successors. It may now without shame be acknowledged, that there was some truth in the fear which the Opposition expressed that Lord Aberdeen did not heartily approve of the policy which he fairly carried out. As a traveller, and as a devoted student of Greek literature, if ever the associations of ancient history could have prevailed over the calm wisdom of the statesman, they might have done so in the person of Lord Aberdeen. A quarter of a century earlier, he had assisted to form the association of the Athenian Travellers. He had been chosen President of the Society of Antiquaries. He had travelled in many lands. But neither the traveller nor the antiquarian induced the Foreign Secretary to entertain any very sanguine hopes for the constitutional freedom of Greece. Perhaps a personal observation of the social condition of the Morea had produced on him an effect directly contrary to what might have been expected. He was not deceived by names. He knew how unfit the descendants of Pericles and Themistocles were for the duties of a regular constitutional government after the fashion of the electors of Marylebone.

The result of the British expedition to Por-

tugal was, so far as it related to the maintenance of the Portuguese constitution, scarcely more illustrious. This is however no reproach to the minister by whom that expedition was sent out; for England was bound to repel all aggression from the kingdom of Portugal. Our troops did not go to preserve the constitution, though it was the constitution which was really menaced. They had not been withdrawn when Don Miguel, without foreign aid, made his first attempt to overthrow it. As our obligations were to the kingdom and not to the constitution, our ministers did not consider themselves bound to interfere, and soon the English people saw a usurper, and a despot seize, with the approbation of an influential portion of the people of Portugal, on the delegated inheritance of the infant Queen, Donna Maria.

At that time the Liberal opinions which were soon to be triumphant in England were rapidly progressing, and many respectable politicians both in Parliament and in the country, were indignant at what they believed to be the apathy of Lord Aberdeen. They stigmatised him as a secret partisan of Don Miguel, and of despotism, because he preserved an unswerving and unsympathising neutrality. Then for the first time Lord Palmerston and Lord Aberdeen stood in

opposition to each other; then for the first time the Liberal party began systematically to condemn the course pursued by the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The minister had still a powerful majority in both Houses of Parliament, and as the Opposition had been so long out of power, and the Tories had so long steadily supported Conservative governments, the Cabinet evidently never suspected for a moment that their majority would fail them. They were far too confident. In the days of Lord Castlereagh it was in vain that Mackintosh and Horner declaimed against the foreign policy of the Cabinet. But although the ministers did not see it, a great change had taken place in the mind of the nation. The settlement of the Roman Catholic question had severed for ever from the government a sincerely religious multitude, who had long supported them solely for the sake of excluding from Parliament those who acknowledged the spiritual supremacy of the Pope. For many years the ministers who had repealed the Roman Catholic disabilities had resisted both that measure and a Reform Bill. The two propositions had generally been classed together as dangerous innovations. Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington had confessed that they were wrong in resisting the one; why should they not also be

wrong in opposing the other? The reputation of the Government for political sagacity had departed; and the great body of the people became Reformers, both at home and abroad.

Much, indeed, may be said for the Government. It was easier to declaim against Lord Aberdeen than to point out how he could have acted in any other manner. Had Canning been in office, it is more than doubtful whether he would have done otherwise than the then Secretary for Foreign Affairs. The neutrality of Lord Aberdeen in the affairs of Portugal can never be considered, whatever the Opposition might assert, an abandonment of the system of foreign policy which Canning inaugurated, and which the Duke of Wellington, on taking office as prime minister, solemnly pledged himself and his government to pursue. When the British troops left England for Lisbon, Canning expressly said they went simply to defend the Portuguese territories from invasion. He most cautiously guarded himself from guaranteeing the new constitution. He foresaw that it would not be permanent, and that it might produce civil commotions. In these domestic contentions he had determined that England should not in any manner interfere. Our neutrality was then a mere question of policy, as in the case of the attack on the Spanish constitution by the French

Legitimists; and it cannot be said that our interests were more directly interfered with in the one than in the other. England might regret the violation of the Portuguese constitution, as unquestionably she regretted the establishment of despotism in Spain. But she could not hinder what she might sincerely lament.

The French army never would have been successful in Spain had not the majority of the Spaniards sympathised with the invaders. Don Miguel never would have set the constitutionalists at defiance had the Portuguese sincerely desired the blessing which Don Pedro had bequeathed to them. In both kingdoms, the victory of despotism can only be explained by admitting what Canning and Lord Aberdeen asserted, that the people really at the moment preferred arbitrary monarchs. Surprising as this may seem to us, when we think of our love of constitutional freedom, it is not so singular when the history of these particular countries is remembered. All their traditions were monarchical; they had both cruelly suffered by men who called themselves constitutionalists; the most glorious period of Spanish history began after the Cortes of Castille had been dissolved by military violence; the new constitution of Portugal was associated in the minds of the multitude with the loss of the

Brazils, and it was the gift of one whom they could not regard as their national sovereign.

The reaction against republican agitation had reached its climax in the spring of 1830. Despotism was once more the fashion; society seemed in the same state as in the days before the Bastille fell; through years of blood and confusion vainly the patriot appeared to have struggled, vainly the hero to have fought, vainly the martyr to have died. The ardent but unwise assertors of freedom had been put down in Naples, Spain, and Portugal; the King of France was closely allied with the Czar of Russia; the disciples of Ignatius Loyola once more crowded round the thrones of kings; and the generous aspirations of mankind were in danger of being once more stifled by the monk's black cowl. East and west, north and south, the soldier was abroad, not to protect governments from foreign enemies, but from the indignant hatred of their own subjects. With the spirit of freedom the spirit of loyalty also appeared to have fled from the earth; Europe was prostrate in a dull and unnatural trance; the iron age of absolutism seemed to have come; an age without hope, without love, without faith, without reverence, but also without rebellion. Millions of armed men, thousands of dungeons, racks and gibbets, the

systematic and harmonious efforts of many profound statesmen had been engaged in bringing about this delightful era: and with scarcely a musket being fired, or a single warning given, in a moment it passed away.

The ordinances of the 25th July, by which the French Charter was suspended and virtually abrogated, boldly set the lovers of constitutional freedom at defiance. They calmly took up the challenge which the feeble hands of Charles the Tenth and his Jesuits had cast at their feet. Paris put forth its strength. The contest was not for a moment doubtful. The Bourbons were driven from the throne, and the popular convulsion in which the restored monarchy disappeared, spread throughout Europe. At the first rumour of the expulsion of Charles the Tenth from France, the Czar of Russia put his legions in motion to invade France once more, and place the ancient dynasty on the throne by force of arms. Nicholas never hesitated; he took it for granted that what he and his allies had once done, they could always do. He considered himself the Captain General of the Holy Alliance, and thought it his duty to check all popular outbreaks, however much they might have been provoked, and however much justice might be on their side. But news of tremendous

import reached his ears. The Duke of Orleans had been placed on the French throne, which was thus identified with popular freedom, and the new sovereign had been recognised by the English Government, with the Duke of Wellington, the friend of sovereigns, at its head. This intelligence immediately brought the hosts of the Czar to a stand. At the sight of England crossing the path of despotism, all the formidable strength of the Holy Alliance was powerless, and the Cossacks slowly retraced their steps.

This recognition of the throne of the barricades by Lord Aberdeen and the Duke of Wellington, had a most decisive effect. The moral weight of England was sufficient to paralyse the right arm of absolutism; the elaborate machinery of oppression which had been brought to such exquisite perfection was broken to pieces, and a mighty impulse was given to the cause of nationality and freedom throughout the world. The Czar was surprised that the Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen should have acted so readily in opposition to what he supposed to be their settled principles. Had he really been acquainted with the characters of the two statesmen, or even known the condition of the nation which they governed, he would have seen that it was impossible for them to have

done otherwise. But recent events have shown that notwithstanding the vaunted omniscience of Russian diplomacy, Nicholas is extremely ignorant of the social condition and the feelings of England, and even of the real characters and principles of politicians whom he ought most especially to know. As it is possible to give too fine an edge to a sword, it is also possible for a diplomatist to be too skilful. A Russian emissary frequently believes he is deceiving others, while he is only deceiving himself and his master.

Though the English ministers had reason to distrust the Bourbons, though the close alliance between Charles the Tenth and Nicholas was the cause of some anxiety to them, though they had even begun to suspect that they had been deceived when they gave credence to the assurance of the French Ambassador that the expedition to Algiers was not undertaken for the purpose of conquest, these were not the motives which induced the Prime Minister to acknowledge the government of Louis Philippe. The Duke of Wellington and Lord Aberdeen did not fear the combined hostility of France and Russia. It was from no hysterical apprehension of this nature, whatever M. Louis Blanc and Sir Archibald Alison may believe, that our Government then

acted. The English historian who has written more than thirty volumes on the affairs of Europe since the French Revolution, and still can credit such a fable, has yet to learn the alphabet of state policy. The ministers acted on those plain principles which were first announced by the Duke of Wellington at the Congress of Verona, and from which they had really never deviated nor thought of deviating.

Had the government of Charles the Tenth been as friendly to England as it was secretly hostile, our ministers would still not have shrunk from acknowledging Louis Philippe as King of the French. No English Cabinet could have refused to recognise the justifiable departure from the direct line of succession, and the establishment of a constitutional monarchy. The Duke of Orleans had long been regarded as the future sovereign of France. The example of England had been frequently quoted as showing the advantages of such a government, even before Charles the Tenth had ascended the throne; and in the event of the Bourbons being dethroned, the English ministers had never contemplated the possibility of this country going to war to restore to them again that power which they evidently knew not how to use. They had certainly been most ungrateful to England.

They had been just as forgetful of the benefits we had conferred upon them, as our other allies. By the confession of Chateaubriand, and other French legitimatists, we have since their fall learnt what we had to expect. War with England was certainly contemplated. The greatest reproach that has been made to the Napoleonists and the Republicans was that should they ever be in the ascendant, the treaties of Vienna would be considered as so much waste paper, and war begun to extend the French frontier to the Rhine. We have now witnessed both a Republican and a Napoleonist administration. By both we have seen the national faith preserved, and the treaties of Vienna still accepted. What the most violent of those who were called revolutionists have not done, the Bourbons meditated doing. We know that they were inclined to put the axe to the roots of their own tree of life. We know that they had determined to set the stipulations of the Congress of Vienna at defiance, and, with an infatuation almost incredible, revive the ambitious projects which both Louis the Fourteenth and Napoleon were unable to execute. Their punishment was just. They despised the alliance of England, and servilely courted Russia; they have now not a friend or well-wisher in this country, and are

finally expelled from the rich inheritance of their ancestors. Their intimacy with Russia has only rendered their restoration to France hopeless; there is not a Frenchman with any real patriotic feeling in his breast who would not spend the last drop of his blood to save his country from the degradation of accepting a sovereign from the hands of the Czar.

It must be regarded as a fortunate circumstance that Lord Aberdeen should have been Foreign Minister when the new king was proclaimed at Paris, and should thus have given such a check to the imperious policy of Russia. It rendered the breach between England and the Holy Alliance complete. It separated this country for ever from the absolute monarchies. That this recognition of the Duke of Orleans as King should have frustrated the plans of Nicholas, proves how straightforward was the policy of the English minister, and that so far from being the accomplice of the Czar at this time, throughout the two years and a half Lord Aberdeen held office, he had been invariably opposed to Russia. In May, 1828, he had deliberately acceded to an administration pledged to maintain the Turkish Empire as necessary to the balance of power in Europe; and his last great public act as Foreign Minister was to establish friendly relations with

the new French king whom the Czar would have been glad to hurl from his throne.

The news of the abdication of Charles the Tenth and the election of Louis Philippe reached England a few days after Parliament had been dissolved on the accession of William the Fourth. The popular party were delighted. On every hustings this change in France was the theme of declamation in favour of freedom; and as England had a new sovereign and a new Parliament, the people exerted themselves to place in power a new Ministry. The Tories were no longer enthusiastic about the Duke of Wellington, since he had conceded Catholic Emancipation. The Ministry fell. But it must be remembered that as the appointment of Lord Aberdeen as Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs was not occasioned by any question of foreign policy, so the fall of the Wellington administration and the installation of Lord Palmerston in the Foreign Office was also exclusively on a domestic subject. It was the desire for a reform in our internal affairs which dismissed the Duke of Wellington and the Earl of Aberdeen, and carried the Whigs and Lord Palmerston to Downing Street on the stream of popular enthusiasm.

CHAP. VI.

LORD PALMERSTON AS FOREIGN SECRETARY.— HIS PREVIOUS CAREER. — FRIENDSHIP WITH FRANCE. — HOLLAND AND BELGIUM. — RUSSO-DUTCH LOAN. — EFFECTS OF FALSE ECONOMY. — TREATY OF UNKIAR SKELESSI. — NEW KINGDOM OF GREECE.—SPAIN AND PORTUGAL.—THE QUADRUPLE ALLIANCE. — PEACE AT ANY PRICE.

THE minister who now assumed the responsibility of Foreign Affairs, and who has been for twenty-five years prominently before the world, had served such an apprenticeship to the business of administration as perhaps no other statesman had ever passed through. There are instances of some of the relatives of the first generation of Elizabethan ministers having been initiated in childhood into the mysteries of diplomacy, and designed from their cradles to fill the highest offices of state. But they owed their position to family influence. They were connections of Burleigh and his colleagues, and the rank which many of them attained was not always according to their merits. Though an Irish peer, Lord Palmerston had not many powerful friends

to push him over the heads of able rivals. He owed his appointment to the important post of Secretary at War entirely to the reputation which he so early acquired. For nearly twenty years he performed the duties of that department with such efficiency and success as may perhaps have been equalled, but have certainly never been surpassed. He was not the slave of routine, but a zealous administrative reformer. The intricate details of military finance, and the regulations of the army were subjected to his careful supervision; and immense improvements were effected, for which he neither received nor expected popular applause. Few people but those intimately conversant with this department, ever knew how much Lord Palmerston had done for the efficiency of the service, or even had the least idea of his great administrative abilities. When he entered the War Office he found everything in the greatest confusion; but after his long tenure of this important place he left it a model of order and industry.

At this time Lord Palmerston troubled himself very little about the personal differences between Castlereagh and Canning. He had not yet become the ardent friend of Canning, and he confined his activity to his office. He was the Secretary at War, and Secretary at War he con-

tinued to be until it appeared that Lord Palmerston and this department could never be disunited. Through all the season of youth and early manhood, through all the changes of administrations, through all the vicissitudes of empires, in war and in peace, Lord Palmerston remained Secretary at War. During that time the most memorable events in European history occurred; the most important domestic and foreign questions were discussed; while year after year he sat silent throughout the greatest debates, year after year he contented himself with moving the army estimates: in discussions on foreign policy, when Lord Castlereagh was Secretary for Foreign Affairs, he scarcely ever opened his lips. Such taciturnity, when Lord Palmerston's powers as an orator and his actions in future years are considered, is truly wonderful and almost incredible.

When Canning became Foreign Minister, Lord Palmerston's consciousness of his great abilities slowly awakened. He gradually overcame what must be called, however surprising it may seem, his habitual modesty. He spoke well on the affairs of Spain. He spoke well and more frequently on other topics. He began to announce some decided opinions on the political and commercial questions of the day. For Mr.

Canning he now felt warm admiration, and adhered to him with generous fidelity when this injured statesman formed his ministry, and so many influential Tory politicians sent in their resignations and positively refused to serve under a Prime Minister favourable to the claims of the Roman Catholics. Lord Palmerston had now a seat in the Cabinet, though he still held his old office. On the death of the Prime Minister he remained Secretary at War under Lord Goderich, and even seemed to take a new lease of the same place under the Duke of Wellington. But at the moment when it might have been confidently reckoned that Lord Palmerston would be Secretary at War for nineteen or twenty years longer, he suddenly resigned with the other friends of Mr. Canning. He gave an extremely graceful explanation of the reasons why he followed his friend Mr. Huskisson out of office, declaring that he fully adopted that gentleman's commercial principles, and, as he distrusted his own powers, had taken him for his guide. The unpretending demeanour of Lord Palmerston after so many years of official services, at this crisis of his political life, offers a remarkable contrast to the forwardness of other politicians who, after a few months of parliamentary experience, and sometimes as soon as they are elected, represent

themselves as capable of leading the House of Commons. "It may be thought presumptuous," he said, "to imagine it of importance to any one in the House or elsewhere, to know why so humble an individual as I am accepted or retired from office; but it will be satisfactory, at least to me, to set myself right with the public." Such was Lord Palmerston on leaving the Ministry. His successes had all been legitimate. With a little more pretension he might long before have vindicated his claims to one of the highest posts in the Government.

He was now for the first time in opposition. Deprived of his office, the House of Commons became the sphere of his activity. His ambition was fully roused, and the Duke of Wellington and the Cabinet soon had reason to regret the day on which they permitted their modest and retiring Secretary at War to leave the administration. Without an effort, and without giving the Government any notice of what they had to expect from him, he stood forth as one of the ablest debaters and most effective speakers of the House of Commons. But there was nothing captious or paltry in his opposition. When the Ministers brought in the great bill for enfranchising the Roman Catholics, Lord Palmerston nobly defended Sir Robert Peel from the attacks

of those who were nominally supporters of the Government, and said that so far from deserving the taunts which had been levelled at him for his inconsistency, his conduct on manfully attempting the settlement of the question was "the greatest and most glorious portion of his career." Like Lord Aberdeen, Lord Palmerston had always been the advocate of Roman Catholic Emancipation; his speech on the second reading of the bill was one of the ablest ever delivered on the question, and powerfully contributed to the final triumph of the measure.

So influential was his support to this proposition of the Government. His criticisms on their foreign policy were not less effective, and it tasked all Sir Robert Peel's abilities to meet the antagonist who now took the leading part in the discussions on the affairs of Europe. Since the death of Canning, there had been no speeches on foreign policy worthy of being compared with Lord Palmerston's two great orations on the troubles of Portugal. Their oratorical merits are very high; in some respects they are even superior to the best of Canning's speeches on almost the same subject; for they are less artificial, and display a vein of genuine manly eloquence, without any mere rhetorical refinement. Their effect was great:

they reverberated throughout England, sank deep into the hearts of thousands, and announced Lord Palmerston as the coming Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs.

To enter into any detail of the vast European transactions in which Lord Palmerston has been engaged, would occupy many volumes, and might even then be far from satisfactory. Little of the principles and policy of a Foreign Minister, is to be learnt from rows of Annual Registers; still less can any extracts from speeches delivered in the House of Commons give a just idea of his career. The Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, when he speaks in Parliament, in reality addresses the whole civilized world. He is obliged to suppress much that in other circumstances he would gladly utter, and to say much that, if not altogether false, is at least only parallel with the truth. He is compelled to speak with the reservation, and frequently with the insincerity, of a diplomatist. Yet there must be a clue to a course of policy; and with a little judgment and patience it may be unfolded. A rapid glance at the most important affairs in their order, as they arise, will indicate much that is not to be seen written in State Papers, or printed in Hansard's Debates. The principle of the philosophy of Lord Bacon applied to a long series of foreign affairs, is a sure guide, and must

conduct an impartial observer to the truth. There is seldom only one course open to a minister. He is generally obliged to make a choice between evils. He never can answer all the objections of his opponents. It is easy for an ingenious mind to find powerful arguments against any policy. Gerard Hamilton believed that so much could be said both for and against any measure, that it was impossible to decide which course was the best; and he contentedly lived without any earnest convictions. But this was the reasoning of a weak, a timid, an abject spirit. To do any good, or be worth anything, we must heartily believe that in politics, as in every other business in this world, there is a right and a wrong, a truth and a falsehood. Making allowance for difficulties, not expecting impossibilities, and avoiding all mere abstractions, we may thus fairly estimate the characters of our statesmen. The past cannot be recalled; and instead of troubling ourselves about how many courses were open to a Minister, we may endeavour to understand that which he has taken. Not what he might have done, but what he has done may be profitably considered. He is thus tried by his own standard; he is the mirror of his own glory or shame.

Amid the reform excitement, Lord Palmerston

commenced his career as Foreign Minister. The whole of Europe was in commotion; from France, as a centre, the spirit of Reform had pervaded the Continent. Then was seen how futile had been the efforts of the Holy Alliance, how little good the treaties of Vienna had accomplished, how inflammable was the popular spirit which was supposed to have been extinguished. Belgium threw off the yoke of Holland; the Poles rose against Russia; over the Alps and through Italy the revolutionary contagion rapidly spread; the thrones of the Peninsula tottered; the remotest corners of Europe felt the effects of the wild explosion.

Here was a world in which even the abilities of the greatest of human intellects might find it an arduous task to govern. The first act of the English Minister was to draw the bonds of friendship closer between England and France. The two Governments began to be considered as allies. For the first time a French alliance was spoken of with respect. It was indeed a critical moment. The peace which had endured for fifteen years seemed about to end; war not only appeared probable, but was believed to be inevitable. The good understanding established between the two Western Powers, at that crisis unquestionably saved Europe from this

calamity; and to Lord Palmerston is due the credit of having, notwithstanding the sneers of politicians who foretold a speedy quarrel, persevered to perfect that union. The necessity of such a concert was indeed evident; approaches to it were made by Lord Aberdeen when he recognised the government of Louis Philippe: it was no new policy, no departure from a former system. Circumstances, more influential than statesmen, were gradually bringing about this friendly feeling: England and France had common objects and common enemies; whoever might have been the minister, such a friendship between the two great neighbouring nations must have been formed.

Had other councils prevailed, Belgium must have immediately become again a battle field between them, and every European government might have joined in this shock of arms. The king of the French saw the importance of conciliating England; the time had not yet come when he durst venture to display any dynastic views on other countries and set the English Ministry at defiance.

The affairs of Belgium were soon the most pressing business of the Foreign Secretary. In at length deciding that it was impossible to unite Holland and Belgium again under the

sceptre of the King of the Netherlands, Lord Palmerston did not, any more than in his friendship with France, carry out a new line of policy. Before the late Government resigned, the King of Holland had appealed to the Treaty of Vienna, and Lord Aberdeen had distinctly refused to assist him with the forces of England in reducing the Belgians to submission. When the Conference of the Great Powers met in London, a complete separation was not indeed decided upon; but it was seen that in thus departing from the treaties of Vienna, statesmen only conformed to the circumstances of the case; the folly of this arrangement, the masterpiece of Lord Castlereagh's genius, had been fully exemplified: a permanent union between Holland and Belgium was clearly an impossibility. The difficulties of a final settlement, owing to the King of Holland on one side and to the Belgian people on the other, were very great, and for a long time seemed insuperable. That all obstacles were at length overcome, that a prince connected with England was placed on the throne of Belgium, that religious differences were reconciled, and a happy and prosperous constitutional monarchy founded, all this was the work of Lord Palmerston; and when he is reproached with the failure of

other constitutional experiments, it is but justice to remember those which have succeeded.

No insurrection ever promised less to end in the permanent establishment of a moderate constitutional monarchy than that of Belgium; none has ever had happier results. The Belgians were not indeed very grateful to their benefactor; because, while asserting their independence, he would not permit them to deprive the Dutch sovereign of territories which peculiarly and incontestably belonged to Holland. There was nothing in the wisdom and foresight of the men who took the leading part in the revolt, to hinder it from terminating like many other insurrections of that year. The agitators were wild and reckless. At one time they even elected the Duke of Nemours as king, although they must have known that such a choice would involve them in a European war, withdraw from them the moral support of England, and menace the new kingdom with destruction. The steady hand of Lord Palmerston steered their frail vessel through all the sunken rocks and dangerous shallows which threatened to wreck it before it reached the open sea, and it now sails bravely along in the wake of England, defying the fury of the elements.

When the Treaty of Vienna, by which Bel-

gium and Holland were connected, was signed, England undertook to support the credit of the new state. Fortresses were to be built, debts were to be paid, ready money was to be found; and hence originated the payment of that celebrated Russo-Dutch Loan which has so much displeased our liberal and economical politicians. The wisdom of the agreement may be questioned. It was supposed that the creation of the Kingdom of the Netherlands was essentially an English interest; and that when we thus consented to pay at stated and recurring periods part of the debt to Russia, we gave to the Czar a powerful motive for not taking any measures likely to disturb the quiet of this political creation of Lord Castlereagh and the Congress of Vienna. But in spite of all the fine phrases of diplomatists, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, if it could have endured, must, by bridling France and Prussia, have been as much a Russian as an English interest. It is certain that when the Czar had any good reason for becoming the enemy of this kingdom, the mere payment of a sum of money would scarcely convert him into a sincere friend. And this payment of gold to induce one Power not to act contrary to the interests of another, can scarcely be distinguished from a tribute. A great nation such as England

should surely be able to protect her own interests without subsidising other sovereigns that they may respect them; and to pay for friendship is in reality to give a premium to hostility. The moment too that it might become of vital importance to Russia to oppose the welfare of the Netherlands, it required no prophetic faculties to see that the few millions which our ministers added to her treasury would not prevent her from being the antagonist of this small state.

But whether the policy of the transaction was good or bad, when the treaty had been concluded, there can be no doubt that the honour of England was pledged to the punctual payment of her share in the loan. After the separation from Holland had been decided upon at the Conference in London, Lord Palmerston still continued to pay the money as it became due, though it had been expressly stipulated in the treaty that all payments should cease in the event of the provinces of Belgium being disunited from Holland, and though the Dutch had refused to pay their share of the debt, when the Great Powers consented to sever Belgium from the dominions of the King of the Netherlands. The public out of doors were angry. The Opposition eagerly seized the opportunity for an

attack on the Reform Ministry. Powerful as the Whigs were at that time, many of their own supporters voted against them, and they defeated the resolution which Mr. Herries brought forward condemning the course the Foreign Secretary had taken, by a very small majority. Lord Palmerston defended himself ably. He contended that nations should be more liberal in their interpretation of pecuniary engagements than individuals; that such agreements as that for the liquidation of the Russo-Dutch loan should be construed according to the spirit and not merely according to the form. It might appear strange, he said, that we should at one time pay Russia for supporting the union of Belgium and Holland, and at another time pay her for supporting their separation. But after all, the principle was the same. It was at one time considered to be the interest of England that the Low Countries should be united; it was now the interest of England that they should be separated; Russia now as before had given the assurance that she would adapt her policy regarding Belgium to our interests; hence the spirit of the former treaty remained, although it had apparently become a dead letter. The money was therefore paid, and continues now to be paid, even when England is at war with Russia.

While this may demonstrate the absurdity of the original agreement, it shows how anxious our ministers were to preserve the faith of England, and how scrupulously they shunned any pretences for evading pecuniary engagements.

At the sight of such an example of national integrity, contrasted with the spectacle of public swindling which other countries have exhibited, Englishmen may well be proud of their nation and their statesmen. Such conduct was wise and upright. The saving of one or two millions, had we repudiated the debt, would have been wretched economy, since the national credit might have been injured. By taking advantage of the change of circumstances to declare ourselves free from the obligation, it is easy to calculate what we should have saved, but very difficult to estimate what we might have lost. National credit is national wealth; and the honour of the state the inheritance of the citizen.*

* As these pages are passing through the press, the Russo-Dutch Loan has again been the subject of discussion in Parliament. Lord Dudley Stuart moved certain resolutions, to the effect that as Russia had flagrantly violated the Treaty of Vienna by not keeping the Sulina mouth of the Danube free from obstructions, the payment of the loan should be suspended. Sir William Molesworth, in a very luminous speech, opposed the resolutions; and the House, by a great majority, ratified the opinion of the Government,

Count Ficquelmont himself does not venture to charge us with dexterously slipping out of our pecuniary obligations. This strict adher-

that even when we are at war, and though unquestionably Russia had been guilty of repeated violations of those treaties to which her faith was pledged, a regard to public credit required that the payment should be continued. This decision was right. Sir William Molesworth's arguments, in reply to Lord Dudley Stuart, were unanswerable. But they did not in the slightest degree prove that the original arrangement was either politic or wise. The four colonies which England received were not worth six millions, nor one million; and to represent our agreement to pay part of the Russo-Dutch Loan, as the payment of a sum of money for the purchase of these colonies, is really to give a most mistaken idea of the whole transaction. If the exertions of Russia for the independence of Holland justified the payment by other states, of the loan which she had contracted in that country, all the kingdoms and empires of the Continent would have been much more justified in taking upon themselves some portion of the immense national debt which England had contracted in the course of the struggle for European independence. What were the "heavy expenses which Russia had incurred in delivering the Netherlands from the power of the enemy," to the enormous liabilities which England herself had incurred by fighting the battles of the whole civilised world? If England only obeyed the instinct of self-preservation in thus stubbornly carrying on the contest, did Russia do more when, at the eleventh hour, after Napoleon had been betrayed by fortune and by his allies, she united for the deliverance of Holland? In fact, all this is mere cant. The idea of giving to Russia "a strong pecuniary motive to identify her policy with ours respecting Belgium," is ridi-

ence to the treaties of Vienna which our minister then displayed, was worthy of the respect of the civilised world. But it did not find imitators. Russia especially, who had gained so much from these arrangements, and who has always been so ready to insist on the conformity of other Powers, was even then setting them at defiance. No person can read the particular Treaty by which Russia acquired nearly all that had not yet been partitioned of Poland, and deny that a free constitution and the rights of the Czar were expressly connected together. The same treaty which gave Poland to Russia gave a constitution to the Poles. Until 1830 a constitution of some sort they possessed. It could not indeed be called free; it had been violated at the mere pleasure of the Czar; his actions had clearly showed that he applied the

culous. The truth is, that the Minister who first agreed to pay the Russo-Dutch Loan was foolish, and the people of England for many generations, until the year 1915, must pay for his folly. Yet Lord Dudley Stuart was mistaken in wishing to see the payment of this loan suspended under present circumstances. The motives of this generous nobleman are, however, always pure; his sentiments are generally exalted; his enthusiasm in the cause of the oppressed is worthy of all respect. It is good that there should be such men in the House of Commons, firmly attached to great principles, and occasionally obliged to dissent from Ministers, but scornfully refusing to play the discreditable game of nominal leaders of Opposition.

principles of the Holy Alliance to Poland, and considered the constitution as depending upon his convenience. The cruelties which the Grand Duke Constantine inflicted on the people who in an evil hour had become Russian subjects, would be thought incredible were they not established by incontestable evidence. When the news of the successful revolution in France arrived at Warsaw, the aspirations for freedom which the Poles must ever indulge until they are extirpated, induced them also, with the rest of the down-trodden millions of Europe, to attempt the recovery of their independence. Heated by resistance, sanguine from their first successes, and wildly expecting assistance from France and England, they at length formally renounced all allegiance to the Czar. But the cruel yoke of the Cossack was not to be shaken off. In spite of the tremendous efforts which the intrepid patriots, with the hereditary valour of their race, made for their freedom, they were at last defeated: Warsaw surrendered, and vengeance was taken. The constitution was subverted. The Poles were now formally treated as a conquered people.

They had unquestionably acted imprudently in pronouncing the deposition of their tyrant before they were certain of achieving their independence. They committed the same mistake

as the Hungarians did some years later. Even Lord Palmerston acknowledged that they were the aggressors; but he anxiously endeavoured to befriend them as much as was in his power. Before the Russian troops entered Warsaw, and while the result of the struggle was undecided though it was but too probable, he had informed Nicholas that he thought the Treaty of Vienna still in force, and that the right of Poland to her constitution had not been forfeited by the rebellion. It was besides asserted in the proclamations to the Russians, while the conflict was raging, that this insurrection was only partial. It was therefore grossly unjust, even had the Treaty of Vienna not existed, to punish a whole nation for the fault of individuals. Although England had acquired little else by the treaties of Vienna, still as one of the contracting parties to them she had the privilege, as Lord Palmerston maintained, to remonstrate against their violation. This she did, when our minister declared his opinion, that by express treaty, Poland had a right, which no rebellious acts could annul, to a constitution. The Czar, however, treated such an opinion with high disdain. He not only insisted that he had the right of conquest to do as he pleased with Poland as with any other portion of his dominions, but in the teeth of France and England he revived the doctrine of

the Holy Alliance, denied the right of the Poles to a constitution, which he thought a free gift after the treaties had been settled. In this unscrupulous interpretation of those solemn compacts he was supported by Prussia and Austria. It was clearly evinced by these three Powers, that the treaties of Vienna existed for their own peculiar use, and that England had nothing to do but to acquiesce in any meaning which an absolute sovereign might choose to put upon them. Thus while we paid the Russo-Dutch loan, even after Holland herself had refused to pay it, because we shrunk from the very shadow of a breach of faith pledged by one of those treaties, Russia did as she pleased with another, and England might remonstrate to her heart's content.

We were obliged to submit to this affront in silence. War was of course out of the question. This was the golden era of the economists; the Government professed peace and reform; the army and navy estimates were diminished; ships were laid up, and soldiers and sailors disbanded, that certain ministers might receive the applause of frugal politicians, who looked upon every farthing spent on warlike objects as worse than throw away. The year 1832 has been taken as one of the model years of these misnamed

economists. They have looked back on it in succeeding times with admiring despair. At no other period were the army and navy regarded with so little favour by the popular party in the House of Commons. The more the estimates were reduced, the more were the ministers cheered, and the more was their pacific policy praised. Every shilling that was saved, every pension that was abolished, and every reduction in military and naval establishments, was eagerly applauded, and considered as a tacit censure on the Duke of Wellington and former governments. Even the administration of the army was interfered with; and popular orators, as in the days of the Commonwealth, resolutely endeavoured to control the Commander-in-Chief. That two millions were saved out of the estimates was thought the most brilliant financial triumph ever won by the genius of a Chancellor of the Exchequer, and it was eloquently extolled in leading articles. But much as this economical feat was admired by members of great towns, it may be confidently pronounced that Count Nesselrode and the Emperor Nicholas were even still more delighted.

While the Porte declined in strength, the Pasha of Egypt was growing more powerful than his nominal superior. In the conflict with

Greece, the fleet and soldiers of Mehemet Ali were the mainstay of the Sultan's authority: and so ably had they been organised and commanded, that had not the great European nations interfered, Ibrahim Pasha must inevitably have reduced the Greeks to subjection. As Turkey was humbled in war with Russia, the Pasha of Egypt husbanded his resources, and gradually became in everything but in name, independent. This extraordinary man displayed such vigour and ability in conducting the affairs of his province, as would have distinguished the most illustrious statesmen of Europe. He had rendered great services to the Sultan, and as generally happens in such cases, was dissatisfied with his position, and aspired to be something more than a subject to one who was scarcely able to defend himself. Ibrahim invaded Syria, defeated the armies of the neighbouring Pasha, took Acre, and in defiance of the commands of the Porte, led his victorious army to Damascus. He then proceeded to Aleppo, and drove before him all the troops with which the commanders of the different provinces attempted to stay his onward march. A brilliant victory opened to him the passes of the Taurus. Master of Syria, he descended into Karamania, and after a bloody conflict routed the remaining forces of the Sultan

under the command of Redschid Pasha, who was himself wounded and taken prisoner. It seemed that the Eastern Problem was about to find an unexpected solution. There was nothing to prevent the Egyptian general from dictating terms to the Sultan under the walls of Constantinople.

And now were seen the consequences of the system of economy which the English ministers had thought fit to pursue. The Sultan in this extremity applied to England for assistance; he asked for a fleet, and the greatest naval power in the world had none to send. Our Government was obliged to make this humiliating confession, and the Sultan had no alternative but to accept the support of Russia. The Czar, more provident than our statesmen, had ships and men at hand. The Russian fleet immediately entered the straits from the Black Sea; fifteen thousand men were at once encamped at Scutari, and a powerful army was soon ready to cross the Danube. Turkey was thus thrown into the hands of her worst enemy. To get rid of his defenders, the Sultan consented to most of the terms of Mehemet Ali; and before the Russian fleet and army left the Bosphorus, the Porte was compelled to agree to the celebrated treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, by which for eight years the Emperor

of Russia was in reality the master of Constantinople, the undisputed owner of the Black Sea, and the lord paramount of Turkey. He acquired the right of interference in the affairs of the Eastern Empire, made the Sultan his vassal, and shut the Dardanelles against his enemies. Through the infatuated economy of our reformers, the Czar gained in peace more than he had done through years of successful war. The two millions which our Minister of Finance saved in the Army and Navy Estimates of 1832, had nearly all been recklessly taken from what was required to build new ships and to purchase new stores. With the exception of some two hundred thousand pounds from the army extraordinaries, and some miserable savings from the expenses of the militia, all this economy was a mere financial phantasmagoria.

It was in vain that we blustered after the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi had come to light. It was in vain that we at last set to work to get ships ready for sea, and, in concert with France, sent them to the scene of action. It was in vain that after Count Orloff had triumphed, and the Russian forces had quitted Constantinople, taking the treaty away with them, that an English fleet sailed to the Dardanelles, from the Dardanelles went to Smyrna, and from Smyrna returned to

Malta. Our economical reformers had been gratified. Our ministers had been praised for their carefulness of the public money. We had saved two millions. We had lost Turkey. England could only send a state paper when Russia sent line-of-battle ships.

The blame of this economical imprudence must principally fall on the Ministers. It is no excuse that they yielded to the wishes of their supporters, or even to a majority in the House of Commons. It cannot be too strongly inculcated that the Ministers who sacrifice the vital interests of the State to gain a little present popularity, are more deserving of the condemnation of posterity, than the most reckless demagogue who propounds schemes which he in his heart believes to be pernicious to his country. All the members of the first Reform Ministry must bear some portion of the blame which attaches to them for their want of foresight. Although there can be no doubt that Lord Palmerston was not personally favourable to those reductions in the estimates, the effect of which was to render our navy inefficient at a most important political crisis, and to deliver the Sultan bound hand and foot to the mercy of the Czar of Russia, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs must take his share of the censure which falls upon

the Cabinet. It was especially the duty of the statesman entrusted with the management of Foreign Affairs not to consent to any measure which might diminish the moral weight of England, and prevent her from fulfilling the important obligations which might devolve upon her as the richest and the most eminent member of the great commonwealth of nations. Had it not been for the vigorous exertions of the French ambassador, Count Orloff would at that time have succeeded in obtaining for his sovereign all that could have been requisite for paving the way of Nicholas to Constantinople.

The danger to Western Europe was not, however, so great as it would have been two years earlier. England and France were friends; and although in no condition to wage an unexpected war, might soon have wrested by force of arms all the acquisitions of skilful diplomacy from their jealous and watchful antagonist. They were even at that time frustrating in Greece the deeply laid scheme for making the new kingdom a mere dependency of the Russian Empire.

The Turks had scarcely left the Morea when the Greeks began to quarrel among themselves. The President of the unorganised monarchy was the dexterous agent of Russia. For a time it seemed that all the endeavours for the freedom

of Greece would end in giving them another tyrant. A civil war broke out. The chiefs of the islands rebelled, and the Russian fleet was actively engaged on the side of the President. But Capo d'Istrias fell under the dagger of the assassin, and his brother was unable to establish the government. Lord Palmerston saw that there was no hope of quiet or liberty for Greece until he could send them a King, and exerted himself to bring the negotiations, which had been so long pending, to a successful termination. It was the interest both of England and France that a sovereign should be chosen out of a sincerely constitutional family, and it was thought that if the limits of the State could be extended, there would be less probability of Russian intrigues prevailing. The Czar had, indeed, thrown many difficulties in the way of a final settlement. But Lord Palmerston had more sanguine hopes of Greek patriotism and virtue than Lord Aberdeen. His energy and perseverance at length succeeded. He had the gratification of seeing the gulfs of Volo and Arta decided upon as the boundary of emancipated Greece, though this increase of territory was purchased from the Porte for half a million. The credit of England, with that of the other two Powers, was pledged for three additional millions; thus, as usual, the English

sympathy for freedom ended in a loan; and the young King, little prescient of Don Pacifico, prepared to meet his illustrious subjects, who promised him that the Muses would in person descend from Helicon to bid him welcome.

He arrived at Athens, and Greece was tranquillised. But much yet remained to be done before a constitutional government, deserving of the name, could be established; ten years more of delay in preparing a real constitution, with representative chambers, passed by before the expectation of English Liberals could be at all realised. The finishing touches to this monarchy had not been given before the game of foreign factions commenced; the union of the three Powers was dissolved; and the welfare of Greece sacrificed to the momentary ascendancy of France or Russia. The kingdom of Greece may be considered a failure, but that failure is no reproach to Lord Palmerston, nor even to constitutional government. The state of Greece has never had a fair trial. If it has failed, the reason is that neither Russia nor France would permit it to succeed. The Czar from the first only intended that the new King should be a puppet of his own, and the French monarch, when he at length thought fit to withdraw from a close intimacy with England, en-

deavoured by every means to counteract the influence of our Foreign Minister in Greece as in other countries.

Lord Palmerston had just time to congratulate himself on the success of his efforts in the Peloponnesus when other struggling constitutionalists required his care. Civil war once more raged both in Portugal and Spain. Don Pedro had returned to Europe determined to assert the rights of his daughter to the crown of Portugal, and Don Carlos was fully resolved to dispute with his niece the possession of the Spanish throne. By a singular coincidence, there were two female sovereigns under age, and opposed by two uncles who wished to deprive them of their crowns. Don Miguel had at least the semblance of popular support; he reigned in some sort through the will of the people; and though he was stained with many crimes, he was at least for a time, the King of Portugal. But Don Carlos had never sat on the throne of Spain. His claim was founded on the Salic Law, which had been introduced by the Bourbons, and was no part of the old national law of the monarchy. It had even been formally repealed. Though his right had been once acknowledged by the will of Ferdinand, and by a decree of the Cortes, a more recent will of the same King, and

a more recent decree of the same assembly, had annulled their former declarations. What they had given, they had also taken away. The same authority that had once recognised the pretensions of Carlos, had subsequently declared them void. The eldest daughter of Ferdinand was clearly sovereign of Spain. When the adherents of Donna Maria and her father took possession of Lisbon, and she was proclaimed Queen, Don Miguel was no longer by any title King of Portugal. It is to be feared that neither the regent Don Pedro nor the regent Queen Christina were devoted to constitutional principles. But circumstances made it necessary for them to seek the support of those who professed liberal opinions, and their cause was supported by all who wished to see despotisms overthrown and constitutions established.

Lord Palmerston had now, as in the case of Greece, an opportunity of carrying into practice the principles which he had professed in opposition. Though the governments of France and England declared themselves neutral in these civil contests of the Peninsula, they unequivocally showed to which cause they wished success. The Spanish constitution had been overthrown by the French Legitimists; the new King of France could therefore only desire to see it restored. Don Miguel, while he held power in

Portugal, had persecuted the subjects of France and England, and the fleets of both countries had separately demanded reparation in the waters of the Tagus. Don Carlos had been obliged to fly from Spain, and had joined Don Miguel in Portugal. The cause of the two pretenders, as of the two young queens, was evidently the same. On the one side were despotism, usurpation, and ecclesiastical tyranny; on the other hereditary right, constitutional government, and religious toleration.

The English people at that day strongly sympathised with the Spanish and Portuguese patriots. While Don Miguel ruled in Portugal and the constitutionalists were expelled from Spain, the political exiles naturally sought refuge on our shores. Numbers of those dark, mustached, picturesque strangers might be met in Regent Street and Oxford Street. Subscriptions were raised for them; fathers of families were pestered by enthusiastic acquaintances to permit unfortunate refugees to teach their children the languages of the Peninsula. What the Hungarian is now in England, those who fled from the tyranny of Ferdinand and Miguel were five and twenty years ago.

When the news arrived that Don Pedro was maintaining himself successfully in Oporto, that

a gallant English sailor had destroyed the fleet of Miguel, that the Spaniards were bent on restoring their constitution, defending their young Queen, and resisting that instrument of absolutism and of the priesthood, Don Carlos, the people of England heartily rejoiced. A field was opened to ambition. Reports were spread of young adventurous Englishmen becoming at one step generals in the service of Isabella and Donna Maria.

The English Government gave every encouragement to the restless multitude who were so eager to fight the battles of the Queens on the Peninsula. Checkmated at Constantinople, Lord Palmerston was victorious at Madrid. Early in 1834, the despotic Powers had another Congress at Vienna, but very different from the great meeting of 1814. In those twenty years the world had rolled on notwithstanding all the efforts which kings and ministers had made to stop it. Austria, Russia, and Prussia were now obliged to content themselves with agreeing to deliver up any disaffected subjects of their respective crowns. Though the Conference at Vienna was represented as a revival of the Holy Alliance, and the questions discussed were kept secret, this league of despotism was no longer what it had lately been. It was met by our

ministers with a constitutional league of the four Western States, and Europe now seemed divided by treaty, as it had long been by opinion, into two opposite political systems. On the side of absolute power were seen Austria, Prussia, and Russia; on the side of popular government, England, France, Spain, and Portugal. Lord Palmerston had repeatedly asserted that constitutional states were the natural allies of England, and now was displayed for the first time in European history the two forms of government decidedly arrayed against each other. The Quadruple Treaty followed so closely after the assembly of the despotic sovereigns at Vienna, that it must be regarded as an answer to it on the part of France and England.

By this treaty we engaged to assist the two regents of Spain and Portugal with a naval force to establish the power of their governments throughout the Peninsula. France agreed to do whatever might be thought necessary to aid in this good work. Nothing was said about constitutions in the treaty, though it was understood that it was a constitutional alliance of the Four Courts. As such Lord Palmerston considered it, and such he proudly called it in the House of Commons.

On the wisdom of this policy there were different opinions. The Ministers were accused of

departing from the principle of non-intervention, which even Mr. Canning had asserted in 1822, and which Lord Palmerston had then defended. The Foreign Secretary replied that there was no resemblance between the two cases. In 1822 an army of two hundred thousand men invaded Spain. Had we then interfered, we must have gone to war with both France and Spain. Now there were no large armies to contend against, nor was it necessary for England to go to war; the Government had only given British subjects permission to enter the service of the Queen of Spain. Don Carlos was our enemy. It was an English interest that the Queen of Spain should succeed. The phrases "Constitutional Spain," and "Constitutional Portugal," were emphatically and expressly used by Lord Palmerston in discussing this question. The triumph of Donna Maria and Isabella the Second was considered as a triumph of the constitution.

And such it was. Our constitutional allies thought fit, as their dominions were more settled and their thrones more firmly established, to forget some of the liberal professions which they had made in their hour of adversity. Those who expected to see the Peninsula become a perfect pattern of constitutional freedom were egregiously disappointed; and, judging the design by the result, they have represented the Quad-

ruple Treaty and the subsequent endeavours Lord Palmerston made for the Queen of Spain, as futile works, neither ably planned nor ably executed. This condemnation is unjust. The design of our great constitutional artificer was good; the materials he was obliged to work with were not of the very highest qualities; but the groundwork of a just, liberal, and beneficent form of government was laid down, and may in the end be the foundation of a glorious constitutional edifice. Justice will then be done to the patriotism, integrity, wisdom and foresight of the English Minister. The small carping critics who expect impossibilities, and on being disappointed are dissatisfied with everything, will be forgotten. Better days are yet to come for Spain and Portugal. Regents, ministers, and sovereigns pass away like shadows; but those noble germinations of national life which are nurtured even amid the imperfections of a constitutional monarchy, may one day be developed, and the Peninsula become the happy abode of public freedom.

Opinions govern mankind. Since the great despotic and barbaric power of the North sets itself resolutely to support the arbitrary governments of the world, it is surely wise policy in an English minister to endeavour to diffuse the

blessings of constitutional government. This is the only effectual method of frustrating the ambition of Russia, and of securing the nationality of Western Europe. The Emperor of all the Russias discovered this truth long ago; hence the Holy Alliance, and the jealousy with which the least indication of popular ascendency in the West has been watched. A people who acquire freedom, must, on the day when their liberties are secured, become the natural enemies of Russia, and the natural allies of England. This Prince Metternich never knew, notwithstanding his sagacity and experience; and therefore all his efforts for opposing the onward march of the Czar have been futile, and he has had the mortification of seeing his country, the more the absolute system was remorselessly carried out, sink by degrees, until it seemed a mere dependency of her unscrupulous neighbour, who was in secret the most deadly foe of Austria. When the Russian influence was most predominant at Vienna, the proceedings of the Austrian Court were most tyrannical; and should Austria ever become the cordial and fervent ally of England, she must first, in self-defence, adopt at home a more liberal, generous, and national policy. It is a mistake to suppose that Austria was the prime mover in putting down the con-

stitutionalists of Naples; it was Alexander of Russia who inspired the deluded statesmen of the Empire with the design, and allowed them to mulct the Kingdom of Naples of two hundred millions of francs as the price of that precious assistance.* Thus it has ever been. Austria has frequently had the odium of measures of which her insidious ally has been the projector. Don Carlos and Don Miguel were both avowedly in friendly communication with Russia, and had they been victorious, must have been mere agents of Nicholas. The possession of the Peninsula would have been anything but a contemptible acquisition; at the very least it might have weakened the antagonistic attitude of Western Europe. Even the King of Naples counts for somebody among the potentates of the world: it would be better to see him the friend of England than the friend of Russia; and he too may yet be ungrateful to his illustrious master.

After endeavouring to give a rapid summary

* Count Pozzo di Borgo, in 1828, when the policy of Metternich was decidedly hostile to Russia, bitterly accuses him of ingratitude to the benefactor of Austria, and mentions Alexander as the monarch who really "dispelled the revolutionary storm" in Naples, and overthrew the Carbonari.—(Despatch of the 28th November, 1828.)

of the most important affairs in which Lord Palmerston took such a prominent part during the first four years of his management of the Foreign Office, it must be candidly acknowledged that his actions, though not always successful, bore honourable testimony to his energy, patriotism, and sagacity. The treaty of Unkiar Skelessi was indeed a grievous blow to England, and cannot but be regarded as discreditable to the Whig Government. But the truth is, that Lord Palmerston had not attained an ascendancy in the cabinet of the Reform Ministry; beyond the sphere of his department he had little influence, and he was not, like many of his associates, an enthusiastic economist. His great abilities were not generally recognised. He was only superciliously tolerated by the noisiest of his colleagues who had not recovered from the excitement of the Reform Bill, and looked upon the Government of England as their exclusive right for at least half a century to come. They had not learnt the important political truth, that there are times and occasions when the best thing a minister can do, is to do nothing. It would have been well had they allowed the agitation to settle down; but they blindly hurried on, until many of their moderate supporters took fright, and even the King, whom they had counted

upon as their own, turned wistful glances to Sir Robert Peel and the Duke of Wellington. The great majorities of the Whigs soon diminished even in a Parliament of their own choosing. That a Conservative administration was considered for a moment possible, two years and a half after the great Bill had been passed, shows how much more cautious the people were than their rulers.

But Lord Palmerston had little to do with the particular questions which frightened many moderate politicians, nor with the personal quarrels which almost sealed the fate of the ministry. His foreign policy had certainly been in 1833 directly censured by the Lords; but a counter vote had been called for in the other House and responded to by the Commons. He proceeded on his course. Warlike as his policy was thought, he boasted, and justly boasted, some years later, of having, amid dangers of every kind, amid wars and rumours of wars, preserved the peace of Europe. When he accepted office war seemed so inevitable that a friend told him that though an angel were to come down from heaven and write his despatches, peace could not be maintained for three months longer. Nearly four years however had passed away, and still there had been no message from the Throne

informing the two Estates that His Majesty had found it necessary to prepare for hostilities.

But this is not the highest praise which the minister fairly deserves. Not only had he preserved tranquillity, not only had he scrupulously kept faith with other governments, not only had he strictly adhered to all obligations, but though occupying a seat in a cabinet pledged to peace, reform, and retrenchment, he had adopted a high tone to other nations, and shown *himself* jealous of the dignity of England, and a sturdy guardian of her honour. To declaim on the evils of war is the easiest of all mechanical exercises. Even the composition of a set of affecting commonplaces on the blessings of peace requires scarcely a more brilliant exertion of human genius. From the proceedings of the Peace Society contrasted with the energy and ability of the statesmen whom Mr. Cobden has repeatedly accused of warlike tendencies, we may learn that an avowedly pacific policy is not unlikely to produce war; and that while the nature of man remains as it is and has been since the creation, a too eager desire to maintain peace at any price is sure to end in war at any price. Lord Palmerston has proved by experience that an English minister can only negotiate successfully with jealous, overbearing, and hos-

tile governments, while he lets it plainly be seen that the friendship of England is worth cultivating, and her enmity to be dreaded. In the interest of peace itself, while holding out the olive-branch in one hand, he must with the other firmly grasp the sword.

CHAP. VII.

CONDUCT OF THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON WHILE FOREIGN MINISTER. — INTERFERENCE IN SPAIN. — DIFFICULTIES OF A LIBERAL MINISTER NEGOTIATING WITH ABSOLUTE GOVERNMENTS. — CHOICE OF AN AMBASSADOR TO ST. PETERSBURG. — THE EMPEROR NICHOLAS AND THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. — A GRADUAL CHANGE OF OPINION ON FOREIGN POLICY. — PRECARIOUS STATE OF TURKEY. — ARROGANCE AND HUMILIATION. — DISCUSSIONS ON FOREIGN POLICY IN 1836. — MR. BELL AND CIRCASSIA. — MR. URQUHART. — PATRIOTISM OF WILLIAM THE FOURTH.

THE short administration of Sir Robert Peel was not distinguished by any important measures of foreign policy. But this interregnum showed that the policy of England did not depend on the mere personal inclinations of any Minister, however eminent; for though the Duke of Wellington was Foreign Secretary, and though he disapproved of the Quadruple Treaty, Lord Palmerston himself confessed, on again returning to office, that the Duke had fairly carried out the principles of the former Whig Government. He did more. He endeavoured to make the contending parties of the Peninsula adopt a more merciful mode of warfare than they had hitherto acted upon, and by proposing a con-

vention by which a cartel for the exchange of prisoners was regulated, attempted to put an end to those murders in cold blood of which both factions were alternately the perpetrators and the victims.

After a few months of opposition, the Whigs returned in triumph to the ministerial benches. The secret intrigues of that factious period have not yet been fully divulged; but it is certain that Lord Palmerston's return to the Foreign Department was not the matter of course which it has generally been assumed. Many of the Whig statesmen had long been engaged in patriotically undermining and thwarting each other; and even their proud and high-minded chief, Earl Grey, felt himself the object of much private jealousy. It is not then surprising that the Foreign Secretaryship was offered by Lord Melbourne to Lord John Russell, and that it was only after the Leader of the House of Commons had declined it, and selected another post in the Government, that Lord Palmerston was again appointed to the Foreign Office.

He at once turned his attention to Spain. The civil war in that romantic kingdom was a slow fever; neither party had energy to subdue the other; the military operations were feeble; there was no tone in the political body. It was only in committing crimes that the leaders

showed themselves able and resolute. When England agreed to assist the Queen of Spain to establish peace in her dominions, it is clear that although the Ministers only undertook to aid the Spanish Constitutionalists with a naval force, that in the event of tranquillity not being speedily established, they could not refuse to make still further efforts in the cause of the Queen. The distinction which the opponents of Lord Palmerston's policy made between a land and a naval force, was not very satisfactory. It was a distinction without a difference. We had unquestionably interfered for the purpose of supporting the daughter of Ferdinand; and the honour of the nation demanded that our interference should be effectual. The true objection to the Order in Council by which the Foreign Enlistment Act was suspended, and still more to the equipment of the Spanish Legion, was that the means were not the best to attain the end that was proposed. But they were the best that Lord Palmerston had it in his power to employ. The French Government, after having at first put its hand to this work, thought fit in 1836 to look back: for the first time since the accession of the Orleans dynasty, a serious difference on this subject occurred between the two Cabinets; and Lord Palmerston was left to his own resources.

It was not then his fault, if he did not adopt more decisive and efficient measures, for securing the success of his policy in Spain.

Sufficient allowance has never been made for the peculiar and unprecedented difficulties which beset Lord Palmerston on every side while he was Foreign Secretary under the Administrations of Earl Grey and Lord Melbourne. A great popular revolution had just been accomplished at home. A sudden change in the executive had followed the recent change in the representative portion of the Legislature. The Foreign Minister of a Reform Cabinet had to walk in new and untrodden ways. The old diplomatic path of his predecessors was closed to him; for, as a Liberal statesman, from the moment of taking office, he became the object of distrust to one half of the governments of Europe. No diplomatic phrases, no general professions, could efface the consciousness that the principles of his party were diametrically opposed to the cherished designs of the despotic Courts. This antagonism was a fact. Some of the most distinguished Whigs had all their lives severely reprobated the measures of the kings and emperors of the Continent. They had at length come into power when all Europe was in a state of revolt and excitement, and when the popular mind of England was deeply agitated.

Lord Palmerston found himself denounced as a friend of despotism because he was compelled to accept the treaties of which his own colleagues and their supporters had disapproved. On the other hand, he was looked upon as a revolutionary firebrand, because he would not acquiesce in the tyrannical proceedings of Austria and Russia. Do what he might, he was sure to offend the prejudices either of those who had long been regarded as the allies of this country, or of those enthusiastic champions of Liberal principles who could not understand that their theories must admit of some compromise if they were to be at all applied to the mixed condition of good and evil which ever pervades all human, and especially all political, affairs.

The extraordinary obstacles which the Foreign Secretary everywhere met with, cannot be better exemplified than by relating the perplexities which attended the selection of an ambassador to Russia.

When the Whigs came into office, Lord Heytesbury was the representative of England at the Court of St. Petersburg. He was asked to remain, though his political opinions were not exactly those of the Ministers. In the autumn of 1832 he was, however, compelled to retire through bodily indisposition. In times of quiet

and regular government, it would not have been difficult to find a successor. But this was not such a period, and the English Ministers had a most delicate task to perform. Lord Palmerston appointed Sir Stratford Canning as ambassador to Russia; and a better choice, so far as England was concerned, could not possibly have been made. This diplomatist had long been familiar with all the secrets of Russian intrigue; and was known to be attached to a Liberal policy. His merits were fully recognised in England, and they were also recognised by the Emperor Nicholas, who, as soon as he learned that Sir Stratford Canning had been fixed upon as the successor of Lord Heytesbury, immediately informed Lord Palmerston that the new ambassador was not agreeable to him, and that he would not be received. The Minister was thrown into a dilemma. If he chose another person for the post, he admitted the right of the Emperor of Russia to annul a diplomatic appointment of the King of England. But it was of course impossible for the ambassador to proceed to St. Petersburg. Lord Palmerston contented himself with giving a silent protest against this somewhat unexpected and arrogant interposition. No other person was substituted; and until the Duke of Wellington and Sir Robert

Peel formed their Government, England neither had, nor was prepared to have, an ambassador in Russia. Yet it was during this interval that the Treaty of Unkiar Skelessi and the subsequent Treaty of St. Petersburg were negotiated, which materially affected the interests of Europe and the balance of power.

The Duke of Wellington was not satisfied with the reasons which had induced the late Foreign Secretary not to acquiesce in the objections of Nicholas. He thought that, as an independent sovereign, the Emperor of Russia had a right to decide whether he would or would not receive any individual who had been appointed by another Court as its representative in his dominions. He determined on immediately sending an ambassador. The Marquis of Londonderry was chosen, when the Duke met with a difficulty quite as unexpected as, and not altogether dissimilar from, that which had prevented Lord Palmerston from sending Sir Stratford Canning.

The Marquis of Londonderry was the brother and heir of the late Lord Castlereagh, to whose title, indeed, he succeeded. He professed great veneration for his deceased relative, fully adopted his principles of foreign policy, and looked upon him as the wisest and most brilliant of statesmen. Every departure from his brother's poli-

tical system the noble Marquis had passionately condemned. His opinion was, that our only safety depended on a stedfast adherence to the arrangements of the Congress of Vienna, and on keeping England firmly united with the arbitrary powers of Europe. On a very recent occasion, he had spoken contemptuously of the sympathy for Poland which was so prevalent in France and England, and which our Ministers had not cared to conceal. He had, in defiance of the Liberal members in both Houses, emphatically called the Poles rebels. When his appointment as ambassador was known, a cry of indignation arose, and the noble Marquis and the Emperor of Russia were taught a memorable lesson. It was soon seen that even the brother of Lord Castlereagh, the Duke of Wellington, and all the weight of the Ministry, could not offer a successful resistance to the popular spirit which had been infused into the foreign policy. It was soon seen that if the Emperor Nicholas was powerful, the Commons of England were not quite impotent.

Mr. Sheil moved for a copy of the appointment. In an eloquent and sarcastic speech, he detailed the aggressions of Russia, and showed that the noble Marquis was not a fit person to be sent to St. Petersburg as the ambassador of

England. Some even of the Ministerial papers ventured to regret the choice which the Duke of Wellington had made; and Lord Stanley, who, on other questions, was gradually separating himself from the Whigs, and growing every day more friendly to Sir Robert Peel and the Conservative party, rose during the debate and said that he could not but consider the appointment extremely improper. Sir Robert Peel made a dexterous speech in reply; but it was impossible even for him, with all his powers for debate, to meet the real point at issue. In his celebrated Tamworth Manifesto, and in the debate on the Address, he had pledged himself to carry out the foreign policy of the Whig Government. Yet it was notorious that the Marquis of Londonderry was in every respect opposed to that policy, that he gloried in his opposition, that he was the enemy of Poland, and now even the enemy of Turkey. He had declared, most absurdly, that the Emperor of Russia had a right to do as he pleased in Turkey, since England had chosen to take her own course in Belgium. He had spoken with contempt of the friendship of France, and had condemned our interference in Spain. As the appointment had not been officially made out, the motion was of course not formally carried. But the discussion had pro-

duced a great effect. It was clear that though Sir Robert Peel had said that he would not advise the Crown to cancel the appointment, Lord Londonderry was almost as effectually stopped from proceeding to St. Petersburg as Sir Stratford Canning had been. On the next evening, without communicating with the Government, the Marquis declared that it was impossible for him now with any propriety to undertake his mission. The Duke of Wellington said that such an interference as that which the House of Commons had made, was an attack on the prerogative of the Crown. And such, in a certain sense, it was. And such, in a certain and even worse sense, since no just cause for the objection could be alleged, was the veto which the Czar had pronounced on the appointment of Sir Stratford Canning. Thus diamond cut diamond; and a reformed House of Commons gave the presumptuous Autocrat a Roland for his Oliver.

The experience of a few years had done much to awaken the English Parliament to the real position of Turkey and Russia. It is evident that even Lord Palmerston had much more decided opinions on this subject, than when his speech of the 1st of June 1829 excited the admiration of the Emperor Nicholas. The English Liberals had fully withdrawn from

the false position into which they were driven by their generous, but unwise, sympathies for the Greeks. Freedom of some sort the modern Athenian patriots had undoubtedly gained; but it had cost a considerable sum of money; and now, as in the days when a horror of Republicanism had allied our government with despotism, England had to pay by far the greater portion of the bill. The economists grumbled, and forgot their diffusive liberalism; Lord Palmerston, on more than one occasion, was obliged to remind them of the pecuniary obligations which they had contracted when it was the fashion to speak of the Greeks as displaying "the energy of their fathers." The days when a noble poet might hope, by taking part in the Greek insurrection, to regain the popularity which he lost by his licentiousness, and when an allusion to the patriotism of the Greeks was sure to be the climax of every speech in favour of freedom, were gone by. Orators no longer rounded their periods with the happy alliteration of Missolonghi and Marathon. The name of Sultan Mahmoud was no longer mentioned with execration. Englishmen began to be sensible of the great stake which they had depending on the fate of the Turkish Empire. The despatches taken from Warsaw were being

published in The Portfolio, and though this publication was, as a commercial speculation, unsuccessful, and though there was necessarily much exaggeration and extravagance in its pages, as unfortunately there ever are in whatever its enthusiastic, but not very diplomatic, proprietor undertakes, it unquestionably did much good among the select few who thought it deserving of attention. There was evidence enough of the designs of Russia, and of the unscrupulous manner in which they were being carried out; and the public were now convinced of what would be the consequences of her success in the East.

It was time. Turkey had grown, while the ignorance of England lasted, almost a Russian province, and in a short time, had this indifference continued, must have really become one, without honourable members being aware that anything particular had happened. The Dardanelles were effectually closed to us. Russian troops garrisoned Silistria. It was to Russia alone that the Sultan could look for assistance against the premeditated attacks of a powerful vassal. Russian medals were even being distributed, by the express command of Nicholas, among the Turkish soldiers.

Nothing could be more transparent than the

motive of the Russian Emperor in sending these medals. It was for the purpose of making the Sultan odious to his own subjects, and particularly to all sincere Mahometans, who would thus clearly see that the venerated chief of their race and religion was the mere dependent of a detested, an infidel, a hostile sovereign. Even at this last extremity, the Sultan ventured to resist the mandates of his artful protector. A whole year elapsed, and the medals were still in the possession of the government. At first the Russian ambassador gently reminded the Sultan of the gifts which his generous master had sent to the Faithful who had been the companions of the Cossacks in the camp at Unkiar Skelessi. He entreated; he insinuated the displeasure of the Emperor; then he covertly threatened; and at length he openly bullied. The Sultan, having no confidence at this time in the ready assistance of the Western Powers, though he knew well that these medals were really, and were intended to be, mere badges of servitude, and might even provoke an insurrection in the streets of Constantinople, was at last obliged to comply. The most insolent conqueror never imposed harder conditions on the most abject foe, than Russia now, in a period of peace and with professions of friendship, drove the Sultan to fulfil.

An English ambassador was indeed wanted at St. Petersburg; and Lord Palmerston at last chose the Earl of Durham for that very arduous office. Both France and England had vainly protested against their exclusion from the Dardanelles. They both requested permission for an armed vessel of each nation to enter the Black Sea; the one for scientific purposes, the other for the conveyance of our ambassador to Persia through the Straits to Trebisond. Both Governments were virtually refused; and the answers to their requests were in both instances dictated to the Sultan by the Russian ambassador.

Lord Palmerston tried the experiment again when the Earl of Durham was proceeding to Russia. He took the route of the Black Sea. He was received with great courtesy by the Sultan, but found that the prohibition was still resolutely enforced. A Russian man-of-war, with her colours proudly flaunting in the breeze, saluted the vessel which carried the English ambassador, and which had not a single gun on her decks to return the courtesy. All the artillery of the English ship had been landed at the Dardanelles, or had been stowed away in the hold. The virtue of submission on the one side, and the vice of arrogance on the other, could

scarcely be carried further. But beneath even this depth there was a lower deep. When the Earl of Durham approached Odessa, not a shot was fired in honour of the presence of the English ambassador. On his remonstrating, the governor affirmed that it was all a mistake; but such omissions never happen by mistake. It was one of those petty insults which the sovereign of a great Empire seems to delight in offering. As no person is too high for the hostility of the Emperor of Russia, so no one is too low. An ambassador and a waiting-maid are equally the objects of his attention. To aim at the empire of the world, and not to disdain the acquisition of an ice-house; to be at once mighty in his ends and paltry in his means, are the characteristics of this imperial crusader of the nineteenth century.

Such repeated indignities as England received at this time, would in any other age have inevitably caused war. The peace was, however, still unbroken. The calamities which all Europe had suffered in the last tremendous conflict for empire and dominion had been so terrible and so protracted, that the civilised nations of the West shrunk from the responsibility of again disturbing the apparent tranquillity of the world, and many respectable and most conscientious

people began to feel a horror, which may be justly called irrational and effeminate, at the mere prospect of war.

A judicious observer might have felt convinced that the national spirit would again promptly display itself whenever it was rightly invoked. This sentimental dread of war has indeed not unfrequently been most prevalent just before the rupture of peace, and in the history of England it may be seen that immediately before the commencement of their most glorious conflicts with despotism and oppression, Englishmen have been most mistrustful of their strength, and least sanguine about the consequences of hostilities. There are not wanting instances of prime ministers having confidently predicted a long era of peace a few months before great wars, which agitated the whole world, have broken out. In the year 1790 before the commencement of the war against French Revolution, which drew England and so many nations into its mighty vortex, Mr. Pitt's speech on the introduction of his budget was a magnificent ode on the brilliant prospects of peace which he expected to continue unbroken for a long period.

An attentive observer might have seen that, notwithstanding all the pacific professions of the

Whig Ministers and their liberal supporters, that a war with Russia was sure one day to come. In all parts of the globe the two nations met in opposition, and the greatest forbearance and circumspection were necessary at every step which Lord Palmerston took.

The year 1836 deserves especial mention as one in which the House of Commons showed unequivocally that hostility to the ambition of the Czar, which was now more and more forced upon every considerate statesman. The discussions on foreign policy in the session of that year were of peculiar excellence. There were three great debates which had almost exclusive reference to Russia. On the 19th of February, Lord Dudley Stuart brought forward the whole question of Russian policy, and in a speech of great merit, traced the steady and almost unresisted progress of the great Northern Power, as it had gone on for years extending its territories, and establishing its blighting influence over the rest of the world. Sir Stratford Canning introduced the affairs of Cracow to the attention of the House. He showed that in the recent occupation of that town by Austria, Prussia, and Russia, the Treaty of Vienna had been glaringly violated, and that in not communicating to England, as one of the

contracting parties at the Congress of Vienna, the long premeditated plan of triumphing over the independence of this last remnant of Poland, this country had been treated with studied discourtesy. Mr. P. M. Stewart also did his part in rousing the public from their lethargy, by explaining the peculiar relation of Turkey to Russia, and illustrating by numerous examples the important commercial interests which were threatened by the uncontrolled authority the Emperor Nicholas had now acquired on the Danube, and on the shores of the Black Sea.

Gentlemen of every party spoke on these great questions; but if in many of the orations there was much patriotism, there was little wisdom. Lord Palmerston was freely censured; and yet war was earnestly deprecated. What then could the Minister do? Not, surely, as some members advised him, menace, and yet shrink from carrying his menaces into effect. Sir Robert Peel, in a powerful and comprehensive speech, exposed with scorn and indignation the unworthiness of such a policy. His arguments were unanswerable. He said, most conclusively, that we could not go to war for generalities. If we had been injured, it was necessary to specify the injury, and prove that redress had been refused. If any particular treaty had been vio-

lated, it was necessary to specify that treaty, and prove that the honour of the nation had been outraged. The House could not then limit itself to a general resolution, declaring that it was the duty of the Government to protect the commerce and the political interests of the country in certain quarters of the globe. Much more than this, or nothing at all, ought to be done. If the representatives of the people thought that the Sovereign had been injured, it was their duty at once to go to the foot of the throne, and assure His Majesty that they were ready to support him in every measure which might be deemed necessary for the defence of his just power and influence throughout the world.

Lord Palmerston's replies in their substance did not differ from what Sir Robert Peel expressed. But he was of course in another position; he had at once to give conciliatory answers to the members who had made the motions, and also to say nothing at which Foreign Powers could take offence. In answer to Lord Dudley Stuart, he admitted that the power of Russia was very great, and that her territories were still extending; but then, he said, her principal acquisitions had been made while the other states of Europe were involved in war, and that therefore the best method of

resisting Russia was to preserve peace. He agreed with Sir Stratford Canning that there was no excuse for the Northern Courts occupying Cracow, which in the treaty of Vienna had been solemnly declared to be "for ever" a free city. They might have been justified in requiring the removal of any turbulent refugees; but not in thus, on the least delay in complying with their demands, pouring soldiers into a town which the treaty of Vienna stipulated that foreign troops should on no account enter. He also agreed with Sir Stratford Canning, that in not giving the least notice to the English Ministry of what was contemplated, an unfriendly spirit was indicated; but it was at the same time an involuntary testimony to the justice of our Government, which they knew would never sanction such proceedings. He enunciated also the great principle that it was not by the relative importance of a state and its ability to resist aggression, that the right or wrong of such assaults on its independence should be judged; and Lord Palmerston was unquestionably justified, according to every law, moral, political, and international, in maintaining that Cracow had as much right as Prussia or any other great Power, to have its frontier respected. But, unfortunately, the spirit of the

treaties of Vienna was different. Unfortunately, it was taken for granted in the memorable Congress, that whatever the Great Powers thought fit to do, the small states had no business to oppose; that the declared will of Russia, Prussia and Austria was sufficient to bear down every fence of law, and justice, and truth, and right.

The Foreign Secretary heartily acquiesced in all that Mr. Stewart had said on the importance of the commercial intercourse of England with Turkey. That trade had prodigiously increased even in times of war and disorder. It was necessary that the Government of England should keep a watchful eye upon Turkey, and be ready in her hour of need to render her assistance. But the Minister treated with disdain the insinuations that the Government had any dread of the power of Russia, or was disposed to submit to any insults which she might think fit to offer. On this important question the language of Lord Palmerston was unequivocal. He professed an earnest desire to keep the peace; but, notwithstanding all his pacific professions, one important reservation lurked behind, which was only the more obvious for not being ostentatious. Nothing could be more admirable than the manner in which Lord Palmerston at this time declared his adherence to

a pacific policy, and at the same time expressed his firm determination to submit to no wrong from any Power whatever. He could never be misunstood. Nor, as the decided attitude which he held for so many years, and the dread with which he was regarded on the Continent, proves, was he ever misunderstood. When speaking on questions of Foreign Policy, he knew what to say and what to avoid saying; how to join courteous language with energetic action; how to make a few sentences delivered in the House of Commons reverberate in the ears of the proudest and haughtiest of the absolute Sovereigns, with more salutary effect than all the elaborate despatches of the ablest diplomatists could produce. He thus hit between wind and water. He kept at bay the wild and rapacious bear of the North, that was ever watching the moment to clutch its victim.

Lord Palmerston denied the correctness of the statement which Lord Dudley Stuart made of the manner in which the Earl of Durham was conveyed to Odessa, and of the entrance of the Black Sea having been refused to the English ships of war. On this point there has been much discrepancy; it was of course the interest, and even the duty of the minister to interpret the actions of Russia at that time as favourably as

possible; since it was understood that there had arisen no absolute necessity for war, and members of all parties wished to preserve peace. But it may easily be believed that the real facts were nearly as they have been stated. They have never been proved to be false; and Lord Palmerston in many important points, even while questioning, really confirmed, much of what had been alleged. He acknowledged that the vessel was not "heavily armed." He acknowledged that the governor of Odessa had not saluted it because he mistook it for an unarmed vessel. There was then no material difference in the two statements; and when allowance is made for the diplomatic varnish which all the parties concerned, Turks, Russians, and English, were interested in putting upon these transactions, there can be little doubt which account is the nearer the truth.

The hostile spirit which such acts as these plainly demonstrate was still more openly displayed during this eventful year. Lord Palmerston, in the course of the discussion on Cracow, had pledged himself to send a consul to that town. The Russian and Prussian bayonets had retired, but the Austrian troops still remained. It was soon intimated that no English consul would be permitted to reside in

Cracow by the lords and masters of that unfortunate state, whose freedom they had guaranteed for all time. This affront England had also to submit to, and thus were the treaties of Vienna thrown in the face of the English Minister.

Still the maintenance of peace was the order of the day. There were indeed some impetuous gentlemen who were so eager for a rupture with Russia that they resolved if the Emperor would not afford England a good cause for war, they would make one. In the pages of the Portfolio some eloquent articles had appeared showing the importance of the commerce of Circassia to England, the bravery of that people, and the injustice of the war which Russia had for some time been waging about the Caucasus. The right of Russia to the coast below the river Kouban was based on the Treaty of Adrianople, but was by no means clear and indisputable. The Circassians too, although they had nominally acknowledged the Sultan as their master, were far from admitting that he had the power to dispose of them without their consent, and hand them over to their hated foe. The brave warriors of the Caucasus were not inclined to acquiesce in the sentiments of smiling diplomatists; they thought that nations could not be transferred from one owner to another, after the

fashion of the statesmen of Vienna and St. Petersburg, like so many head of cattle. Following the natural impulse of their unsophisticated hearts and understandings, they trusted to their good swords; nor have they trusted in vain. A blockade had been established by Russia along the coast, and its existence communicated through the ambassador at Constantinople to the British Government; but as the ministers, without positively denying, did not think fit to recognise the justice of the claim which the Emperor was enforcing, the blockade had never been notified in the Gazette.

This passive resistance did not satisfy the inspirer of the Portfolio, and the small circle of which he was the centre. Lord Palmerston was against his will to be driven into a war. A certain back-stair influence was brought into play; confidential communications were held with Sir Herbert Taylor, the King's private secretary; hints were given; some obscure officials, who were supposed to know the opinions of their chiefs, looked mysterious; and Mr. Bell, a merchant, was inspired with the design of sending a cargo of salt to Circassia, and of thus bringing the question to an issue. That the Secretary of State might incautiously countenance his speculation, he first entered into a

correspondence with Lord Palmerston. But the Minister was on his guard, and was fully resolved to have nothing to do with this officious attempt to bring about a catastrophe. Mr. Bell was informed that he must judge for himself, that Lord Palmerston could not give advice to any merchant on a private commercial enterprise, that for all recognitions of blockades, the Government must refer him to the Gazette. Mr. Bell eagerly desired the Government to authorise his commercial and political designs; Lord Palmerston cautiously abstained from giving him the least encouragement. Trusting, however, to the promptings of what he vaguely termed the Foreign Office, though contrary to the obvious meaning of the letters of the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Bell, like the enterprising and patriotic merchant that he was, set out for Constantinople. There the regulations of 1831 and 1836 were shown to him by no less a person than the English ambassador. The risk to be incurred was now plain. Mr. Bell hesitated, and thought of abandoning his cherished project of giving the Circassians the opportunity of purchasing his excellent cargo of salt, whatever the fiscal regulations of Russia and the stringent law of blockade might say to the contrary. The Secretary of the Embassy was excited; he felt

that the great moment of his life was now drawing near. He advised Mr. Bell to proceed, notwithstanding the language of Lord Palmerston and Lord Ponsonby. Was not the private secretary of the King more powerful than the Secretary of State? So thought Mr. Urquhart, and in full reliance on his wisdom, the Vixen entered the Black Sea, and at last let go her anchor in the bay of Soudjouk Kalè. No time was lost in informing the natives of the saline comforts with which the sloop was freighted. But before anything could be done, down came a Russian brig-of-war; the Vixen was seized, carried ignominiously into Sebastopol and confiscated as a contraband trader. It seemed as though Mr. Bell had determined to make the capture and loss of his vessel doubly sure. He was not satisfied with breaking the blockade; he was not content with sending a cargo of an article which Russia had prohibited from being imported into Circassia at all; but his vessel also entered a port which lawful trading ships were forbidden to approach.

Mr. Bell called on the English Government for vengeance; full reparation at least he expected to receive. He implored the assistance of the House of Commons. But whatever might have been the justice or the injustice of

the proceedings of Russia in Circassia, Lord Palmerston felt that he must either acquiesce in the legality of the confiscation, or go to war in vindication of Mr. Bell and his sloop Vixen. The pacific alternative was preferred; Mr. Bell was ruined; and his name appeared in the Gazette, where he complained that the notification of the Russian blockade had never been. His history illustrates the danger which an English merchant must expect to incur when he will become a politician, and attempt to solve experimentally grave problems of international law.

But the name of Mr. Bell and of his ship would long ago have been forgotten, had they not been associated with the fall of the ingenious Secretary of the Embassy at Constantinople, who was unquestionably the prime mover in the business. A man of genius may be known by his works. The plan of the voyage of the Vixen has altogether the impress of Mr. Urquhart's mind. He has never denied that he did persuade Mr. Bell to proceed, after Lord Ponsonby had advised him not to go. He has never been able to prove that Lord Palmerston directly or indirectly sanctioned the expedition. In thus encouraging a merchant to take a course which might involve the country in

serious difficulties, he had been guilty of a gross breach of official duty. Mr. Urquhart was Secretary of the Embassy; and it is the business of a diplomatist to endeavour to maintain peace; but the course which he prompted Mr. Bell to pursue might easily have produced war. For such conduct there could be no excuse. If every English diplomatist in every part of the globe were thus to act on his own individual opinions, without the direction of the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and rashly encourage proceedings for trying disputed questions, it is obvious that there never would be a single year of peace. Lord Palmerston could only take one step. Mr. Urquhart had applied for leave of absence; he was informed that he could not be permitted to return to his post; but the minister kindly assured him that he would keep the reason of his dismissal a secret even from the ambassador at Constantinople.

This consideration for his feelings did not satisfy Mr. Urquhart. Trusting to private influence, relying on the friendship of Sir Herbert Taylor, and on the remembrances of kindness in the highest quarter, he had proudly ventured to brave the impotent displeasure of the Foreign Secretary. But he found, to his dismay, that

the Secretary of State, as the responsible servant of the Crown, was not the contemptible automaton that he had supposed him to be. Mr. Urquhart was dismissed; but he has never been able to consider calmly the reason of his disgrace. He imagined that he had fallen a victim to his honest and uncompromising patriotism. Dark suspicions entered his mind. He had long been a marked man for his opposition to Russian intrigues. His ruin had been resolved upon; and though holding the seals of the Foreign Office of England, he was convinced that the English minister was a Russian agent.

With the restless energy of a man labouring under one idea, and stimulated by the goads of wounded vanity and disappointed ambition, Mr. Urquhart from that moment became the relentless enemy of Lord Palmerston. He denounced the wickedness of the minister in market-places. Pamphlet after pamphlet and article after article came forth in the same spirit from the press. Paid lecturers traversed England from one end to the other, all declaiming on the crimes of the Foreign Secretary, who had sacrificed the best interests of the country in the person of Mr. Urquhart. The dismissed Secretary of Embassy saw the hand of Russia in everything. Whatever Lord Palmerston did,

and whatever he left undone, was, in Mr. Urquhart's opinion, the result of his appalling treachery.

In justice to Mr. Urquhart it must be allowed that he had carefully studied the Turkish question. At a time when most diplomatists, and even statesmen, were following the old policy of routine, and loudly professing their confidence in the Emperor Nicholas, he saw the importance of the dominions of the Sultan, and the direction in which Russia was sinuously advancing. The first draft of the commercial treaty between England and the Porte was drawn up by him, and Lord Palmerston has readily given him the credit which was his due. Had the knowledge which he possessed of the political and commercial relations of the East been guided by sound judgment, he might have done his country inestimable service. From the imprudent manner in which he enforced his views, his experience and information were detrimental to the cause he wished to support. By rushing wildly into extremes, by indulging in exaggeration when even the plain truth seemed hyperbolical to those who had not mastered the subject, he imparted an air of ridicule to the whole question, and actually prevented the public mind from giving it the earnest consideration which it might

otherwise have done. The absolute necessity of resisting Russia, and of defending Turkey, is now generally admitted; but it ought not to be forgotten that Mr. Urquhart was long an object of derision for pertinaciously pronouncing the same opinions. What, when he first spoke of it, appeared to his astonished listeners as a monstrous paradox, is now a simple truism. Shameful as has been the rancour which Mr. Urquhart has exhibited towards Lord Palmerston, this statesman has never stooped to depreciate the considerable attainments of his virulent adversary, who has suffered the common fate of those who have the misfortune to be right at the wrong time, and who, though they may be sincere and upright in their general principles, when their own personal interests and passions are concerned, mistake private malevolence for public spirit.

Mr. Urquhart has been unquestionably correct in arguing, as he has always done, that throughout this long period Russia has contemplated the certainty of a war with England. That peace remained undisturbed for so many years was not owing, as it has sometimes been stated, to the wisdom of the Emperor of Russia, but to the singular prudence and forbearance of our statesmen. The energy of Nicholas was perpetually

directed to those objects which he knew might at length make him dispute the naval supremacy of England. The state of the Continent afforded him the pretext for keeping up that immense display of military force which excited the apprehensions of Europe. But it was no dread of revolutionists and republicans, it was no jealousy of the power of France and Austria, that made the Emperor of Russia labour incessantly to organise powerful fleets, both in the Baltic and the Black Seas, and exhaust all the resources of science and art in building fortresses which he felt proudly confident would be impregnable. This was for the purpose of opposing England, and England alone. It was for this that his fleets paraded in the Baltic. It was for this that naval reviews were the most cherished amusements of the restless potentate. It was for this that cannon bristled at Cronstadt and Sebastopol, and that fortification after fortification was rapidly being raised.*

To such an extent had these armaments been carried, that they had for some years been the

* "Although," wrote Pozzo di Borgo to Nesselrode in 1828, "there is no probability of seeing an English fleet in the Black Sea, it would be prudent to fortify Sebastopol well against all approaches by sea. If ever England should break with us, against this point will her attacks be directed if she believe it attackable."—*Dispatch, 28th November.*

cause of anxiety to the British Government. Lord Palmerston had to ask for explanations. It was a subject on which William the Fourth himself felt strongly. After the violent speech at Warsaw in the October of 1835, there could be no doubt that the passion and arrogance which the Czar then showed himself to possess, would some day endanger the peace and security of the civilised world. The King of England felt that it was not for him to submit to such menaces. He went even beyond his Ministers. As a sailor, he could judge of the rapidly increasing naval strength of Russia, and he knew that all these mighty preparations were covertly intended to dispute the maritime ascendancy of England. To the last day of his life this rivalry occupied his mind. He cordially approved of Lord Palmerston's policy in Belgium, Portugal, and Spain, because he thought that every effort to establish a free constitution must directly frustrate the plans of Russia. William the Fourth had many deficiencies; he was not a great man; but he had the sentiments of an English King.

The regrets of his people followed him to the grave. In the few years he had filled the throne, much had been done for justice, freedom, and civilisation. Nor was the work of the Foreign

Secretary of the Reform Ministry, during his six years of office, such as future generations will blush to remember. The Holy Alliance had been left far behind; its palsying influence had been shaken off for ever. England had gone on her own way, trusting in that future in which the great men of former times believed; that glorious future which, in spite of the indifference and contempt of their less gifted countrymen, a Shakespeare, a Raleigh, a Bacon, and a Milton saw, even "as an eagle mewing her mighty youth;" that future to which Elizabeth appealed when she defied the civil and religious tyrant of her age.

CHAP. VIII.

COMMERCIAL TREATIES OF THE WHIG ADMINISTRATIONS. — TREATIES WITH AUSTRIA AND TURKEY IN 1838. — STATE OF THE EAST. — SULTAN MAHMOUD THE SECOND AND MEHEMET ALI. — LORD PALMERSTON'S POLICY IN SYRIA AND EGYPT. — TREATY OF THE 13TH OF JULY, 1841. — POSITION OF LORD PALMERSTON ON THE RETIREMENT OF THE MELBOURNE MINISTRY.

AND now another maiden ascended the English throne. At the age of eighteen Victoria found herself the mistress of a realm greater, nobler, and fairer than any princess in ancient or modern times had ever inherited. She was at the head of the civilisation and the freedom of the world. All that Elizabeth and her warriors and statesmen had ventured to hope, all that her great poet had imagined, was now a mighty reality. There was no land in which the British language was not spoken; there was no sea on which the British flag was not respected; there were no people fighting for their liberties by whom the British Constitution was not admired. The young sovereign might well marvel at the

splendour of her inheritance, and tremble at her responsibilities. She might well ask for the support of The Being who raises and destroys empires, who makes and unmakes kingdoms, and who sets up and pulls down the diademed minions of the earth.

The liberal governments of Spain and Portugal still existed, after a certain fashion. Queen Victoria, in her days of sanguine hope and generous enthusiasm, might earnestly wish for the success of Isabella and Donna Maria. In Portugal, however, after all the services that Englishmen had rendered, our countrymen were very unpopular. In Spain, after so many exploits of the British Legion, some of its recent efforts had been disastrous. The civil war still continued; but the British auxiliary force, at the hour of their sovereign's accession, was just being dissolved.

Lord Palmerston had a difficult task to perform. It was in vain that he endeavoured to apologise for the bad success of his exertions to tranquillise Spain. It was in vain that he appealed to those great principles of constitutional government which were so justly dear to his friends. His Spanish policy was vehemently attacked, and it must be confessed that there was much plausibility in some of the objections which

Sir Robert Peel and his followers made. So far, it had certainly been unfortunate; and all who judged by the event were furious against the Minister. Yet any other course might have been quite as severely criticised, and perhaps with quite as much reason.

Lord Palmerston suffered much in popularity. Even the English Liberals scarcely sympathised with him; he was not considered a very earnest reformer. His great abilities were not yet acknowledged; he was not ranked among statesmen; he was at best thought a good man of business, combining pleasantry and jocularity with a certain steady paced industry. He was a mark for the scurrility of all the opponents of the Whig government. Even Sydney Smith, the great wit of the reformers, in the letters to Archdeacon Singleton, which amused all England, joined the assailants of the Ministry in disparaging the Foreign Secretary. He was called by opprobious names; he was constantly derided by some of the most powerful organs of the press. Of all the members of the Whig cabinet, perhaps Lord Palmerston was the most generally abused in the first year of her present Majesty's reign. Yet few of them were less retiring, or less directly responsible for some of those serious mistakes which weakened and

divided the popular party. Credit was not given to him for the measures in which he had been undoubtedly successful. He justly pointed to Belgium as the result of his energetic diplomacy. He was met by a laugh and a retort that he had composed seventy protocols on the subject. Yet, so delicate was the question then agitated, so many conflicting interests were involved in it, so nearly was all Europe on the threshold of war before it was finally decided, and so much was the pacific settlement at last brought about due to Lord Palmerston, that had not his assailants been blinded by party spirit, they must have seen that as long as the Minister succeeded in maintaining peace, it was no reproach to him that he had drawn up many protocols, even though he had written not seventy only, but seventy times seven. In fact Lord Palmerston succeeded in this and in other threatening negotiations because of that same restless activity which was imputed to him as a fault. So harassing were the obstacles he everywhere met with, and so perplexing the jealousies of rival sovereigns, that a less determined man would long before have given up in despair his efforts at conciliation, and allowed matters to take that course towards which they seemed irresistibly tending.

The admirable patience and activity of the Foreign Secretary were never more thoroughly exercised than in his attempts to induce foreign governments to consent to commercial treaties on the simple and honest principle of reciprocity. Lord Palmerston's commercial treaties are a peculiar feature of his ministerial career. They have been much misunderstood, and most absurdly misrepresented; and because he was not in every instance successful they have been ridiculed, like most of his arduous endeavours to increase the power and influence of his country. The mere mention of a commercial treaty has excited in some minds a sensation of horror. It is at once associated with a series of endless and wearisome negotiations which are sure to have no useful result. Nor is this prejudice altogether destitute of some appearance of reason. Difficult and almost hopeless it was to get many foreign governments to admit that the world was wide enough for them all, and that free commercial intercourse would ultimately benefit all nations as much as England. From the year in which peace was established by the downfal of Buonaparte, our generous allies showed their gratitude to England, who had subsidised them so largely, by carrying on a new and extraordinary war. Brigades of custom-

house officers now sprang up in grim hostility to the produce and manufactures of this country. Wherever the British merchant went, he was met by a fiscal blockade. An English ship of war might have much more easily destroyed a hostile fortress, than all the commercial marine have traded advantageously where the custom-houses in a continental port had been established: Russia, Austria, Prussia, and France might have subjects of dissension among themselves; but on the propriety of excluding the produce of England they were unanimous, and they waged a common war.

Lord Aberdeen, during the administration of the Duke of Wellington, had striven to persuade those who represented themselves as friendly governments, to adopt a better system. Nor had he been altogether unsuccessful. In some instances the rigid code had been relaxed; several commercial treaties had been agreed to; and in these negotiations, as in others of a different kind, Lord Palmerston only proceeded on the course which his predecessor had begun. But he laboured at this work earnestly and indefatigably. Again and again rebuffed, again and again he renewed his efforts. The Duke of Wellington in the lines of Torres Vedras scarcely displayed calmer resolution and more

unshaken energy than Lord Palmerston in his war against the prohibitive customs duties of the Continent. He also had his Mr. Perceval. More than one President of the Board of Trade seriously talked of resigning his office in disgust rather than continue longer what he regarded as a fruitless and interminable contest. This fight for free trade or commercial reciprocity was indeed a hard one; for it is much easier to gain a victory by force of arms than prevail on subjects, ministers, governments, and sovereigns to rise superior to their vulgar prejudices and frankly acknowledge their errors.

The two most important of the fourteen commercial treaties negotiated while Lord Palmerston was the Foreign Secretary of the administrations of Earl Grey and Lord Melbourne, were those with Austria and Turkey, concluded in the year after Her Majesty became Queen of England. Their effects were not merely commercial; they had important political consequences. The position of Turkey must ever be greatly affected by the relations in which England and Austria may at any time stand towards each other. The treaty with Austria, therefore, greatly concerned Turkey, as the treaty with Turkey greatly concerned Austria. Lord Aberdeen, in 1829, settled a commercial convention with

Austria, which, to a limited extent, carried out the principle of reciprocity. But it was only to endure ten years. As the time when it would expire drew near, Lord Palmerston had of course to provide for such a contingency. The commercial treaty of 1838 was on the same principle as the convention of 1829, but of much wider application, in a still more liberal spirit, and of a much more permanent nature.

The obvious effect of the fourth article of this treaty, by which it is stipulated that the merchant ships of both nations shall freely navigate the Danube throughout its whole course, was evidently of the most vital importance. Its tendency was to counteract the control over that river which, by a "fraudulent" interpretation of the treaty of Adrianople, and by every kind of false representations and artful manœuvres, Russia had succeeded in establishing. In the just and vigorous execution of this article, the political independence of Austria and her commercial prosperity were deeply interested. Every industrious mechanic in the dominions of that empire saw the necessity and the value of this treaty. The news of its ratification was received with joy. Prince Metternich was loudly cheered when he appeared on the exchange of Trieste; in Hungary, and

wherever a wish existed to oppose the baneful influence of Russia, it was felt that a great success had been achieved.

The commercial treaty with Turkey was a gigantic step in the same direction, and was even still mightier in its results. It was justly regarded as another triumph over Russia. Throughout Europe it was said that the diplomatists of Nicholas had received a check even in their chosen field of conflict, and where they thought themselves assured of their triumph. From the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi to 1838, the Sultan could scarcely be considered his own master. But he now once more resumed his independence. The struggle in the Divan between England and Russia was known to all the world, and the unscrupulous agents of Nicholas were successfully encountered by the plain, manly, and frank diplomacy of the English statesman.

Examined by the abstract principles of political economy, this commercial treaty will be found far from satisfactory. It has many short comings; it has some absurd stipulations; it is certainly not a perfect specimen of what a commercial treaty, according to the doctrines of free trade, ought to be. But if some of the terms of the treaty are hard, they are not harder to the

British merchant than to the subjects of the Sultan. It is agreed that England shall enjoy all the advantages of the most favoured nation; that British goods shall pay three per cent. import duty, with an additional duty of two per cent. on their transport and sale; that the Porte may levy an export duty of three per cent.; and that instead of the interior duties, which were such a serious hindrance to the diffusion of our manufactures in the Turkish dominions, a certain fixed impost shall be levied. Such were the leading provisions of the treaty. It, however, recorded the readiness of the Sultan to settle the commercial affairs of other nations on a similar foundation; and its whole spirit was in effect to break the strong chain of monopoly which Russia had so long been forging, link by link, round the Turkish Empire.

This was the great object of the negotiation; and to this the mere commercial arrangements were secondary. For this it was worth while to make some sacrifices, and to acquiesce in some restrictions to which, in different circumstances, neither Lord Palmerston nor any other minister would have given their consent. In Paris, Vienna, and Berlin, it was admitted, even by the partisans of Russia, that she had been defeated

by England; and other governments began to rouse themselves from their apathy.

But Mr. Urquhart, who now saw his labours completed by another person, did not join in the shout of triumph which was echoed over Europe. He declared, in no equivocal language, his suspicions of Lord Palmerston's duplicity. He eagerly perused the treaty when it was given to the public. Some of the articles were different from those of the original draft; some of them were not so beneficial to England as his projected articles. He felt for his masterpiece of commercial wisdom that love which a father feels for his child, or a poet for the creation of his genius. He was indignant that there should have been any alterations, omissions, or additions. He thought his work ought to have been ratified precisely as it had been originally planned. He believed that it was not the business of a negotiator to accept the best terms that he could obtain, but the best that could possibly be imagined. Smarting from his recent humiliation, and full of his suspicions of treachery, he was now convinced that the whole treaty was a mere deception, that the paw of the great bear could be discerned in it, and that all England, and all the merchants and statesmen

of Europe, were deceived when they applauded it as a victory over the Imperial Dictator.

Had the commercial advantages of the treaty been as illusory as Mr. Urquhart supposed, it would not follow that England had gained nothing by that negotiation. It is certain that Russia stood aloof, and refused her adhesion. It is certain that all the other Powers approved of it, and hastened to joined England. It is certain that some years later Russia thought fit to follow the example of this country, and thus tacitly admitted the justice and the utility of the treaty. It is certain, too, that Lord Palmerston's success was universally believed in by the most experienced politicians; and in political affairs even the mere opinion of success is almost as important as the reality. The fiction grows into a fact; and among nations gives that weight and influence which the clearest statistical tables sometimes fail to command.

This was eminently so in 1838. If this success was imaginary, its consequences were certainly not imaginary. The word "Palmerston" became a great one in Europe; it became a talisman which has not yet lost its magical virtue. Never, since the days of Chatham, did the simple name of an English statesman carry with it such power: it was a power of which

Englishmen may be honestly proud, for it did not depend on armed battalions nor on the mere physical force of an empire; it was a power essentially moral; a power founded on opinion; a power in which the public spirit of England was embodied, disciplined, and arrayed against that unscrupulous and vain-glorious despotism which, like a black cloud at first no bigger than a man's hand, after having gradually spread over the whole northern and eastern horizon, now impended over the West, depressing the hearts of all lovers of true freedom, and darkening the face of nature.

It was well for the world that Lord Palmerston had attained a great position and acquired a reputation for courage, energy, and determination. The state of the East soon required the complete exercise of these masculine qualities.

Mehemet Ali had never abandoned his design of rendering himself a great potentate independent of the Sultan, and recognised by Europe. The dread of his intentions, and the hope of succour from England, were the motives which led the more enlightened of the Turkish ministers to consent to the commercial treaty. Already the Pasha of Egypt had refused to pay his annual tribute to the Porte. Already his great military and naval preparations had excited the apprehensions of the Sultan, and the

attention of every statesman. Already he had even taken upon himself the sacred rights of the Sultan as caliph and chief of Islam, and had ventured to interfere with the administration of the holy cities which are so deeply venerated by all true Mussulmans.

Sultan Mahmoud the Second was fast hastening to the tomb; but feeble as he was through his infirmities, though his frame was torn by excruciating agony, and his mind still more tortured by the fear that the empire which he had so ably endeavoured to save, was on the brink of destruction, he resolved, with the spirit of his great ancestors, not to submit to the usurpations of his ambitious subject. In the spring of 1839, the Commander of the Faithful collected a powerful army on the banks of the Euphrates, and prepared to contend for the rights of which he was the sacred and hereditary guardian. A formidable force, on the other hand, was assembled at Aleppo under the command of Ibrahim Pasha. A great European and Asiatic crisis was drawing near.

The catastrophe which the Ministers of France and England had deprecated ever since the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi had come to their knowledge appeared imminent. If the Sultan

should be defeated, Russia would have a fair pretence for rushing to his rescue and confirming her influence at Constantinople. If the troops of Nicholas should be once more quartered at Scutari, it might be doubtful whether they would ever return. If the Russian fleet once held the Dardanelles, another Cronstadt, another Sebastopol, might soon be erected in that important position, even with the permission of the Sultan, and under the pretext of defending him; then the sure and speedy dissolution of the Turkish Empire would be inevitable; and the Sultan become to the Emperor of Russia what the Great Mogul became to the East India Company. He might still reside in a palace on the Bosphorus; he might still be surrounded by all the pomp and ceremonial of eastern magnificence; treaties might still run in his name; but all political power, all real authority, must have departed from him; his glorious heritage must have passed to his ostensible protector; and the dominion of Russia would only have been more secure, and the state of transition rendered more easy, by this nominal independence. Of all the "modes of domination" which Lord Aberdeen in 1829 so sagaciously foresaw, when so many liberal politicians were the slaves of prejudice, this would unquestionably have been

the most "irresistible." The Sultan would have been placed, like his predecessor Bajazet, in a cage, of which the Emperor of Russia would have kept the key.

It was this result which all the civilised nations of the world had so deep a stake in averting. It was this result which it was the especial duty of Lord Palmerston to prevent. He had given the Porte clearly to understand that should Mehemet Ali boldly carry matters to an extremity, it might expect aid from England. France had been consulted, and the Governments of the two great Western nations were ostensibly united. But the French Ministry was in an extremely unsettled state. Louis Philippe would be his own prime minister; few eminent French statesmen would long consent to occupy a second place in a government in which they were thought to be the chiefs; and a succession of precarious administrations rapidly followed each other. As the King of the French was known to be personally favourable to the alliance with England, a strong party opposed to his Government grew dissatisfied with the system of foreign policy of which the connection with England was the foundation.

When the Eastern difficulty broke out, the

action of the two Governments was apparently harmonious. It is true that even then a difference of opinion might be discovered: France evidently regarded the Sultan as the aggressor, while England considered that the quarrel had been forced upon him by his aspiring servant. But this seemed of slight importance. A common jealousy of Russia, and a fear of the advantages which the Emperor might take, should the Sultan be by the fortune of war rendered helpless as in 1833, sufficed to keep the Western Powers together.

The events of a few short months proved that the doubts which the English and French Ministers expressed of the inability of the Sultan to resist the aggressions of Mehemet Ali were well founded. The general of the Sublime Porte was completely defeated, and there was nothing to prevent Ibrahim Pasha from marching to Constantinople.

Before the news of the rout of the Turkish army reached the Bosphorus, Sultan Mahmoud slept with his fathers. He retained the energy and determination of his character to the last. Amid the distractions of his empire, the rebellion of his dependents, and the miseries of a social and political revolution, with an enfeebled frame and a broken heart, he had displayed the

qualities of a hero. It may be well questioned whether Mehemet Ali himself, whose abilities were so much praised, and whose star was rising so proudly in the East, had in all the vicissitudes of his life and his struggles from obscurity to glory shown more genuine greatness, more unshaken courage, and more real genius than this unfortunate Sultan, who in such a sad hour prayed his last prayer and breathed his last breath. He had stood by the couch of a declining empire, and had not despaired. In defiance of the prejudices of his subjects and the sneers of Europeans, he had striven to revive, when it seemed at the last gasp, the expiring dominion of his house. With none to encourage, with none to guide him, he had made a political resurrection, and had given organisation to a state which was nothing but a mass of ruins. The work he had performed was far beyond the abilities even of the most loquacious of political reformers. He had struggled earnestly and wisely; and had earned a new and peculiar kind of glory by arresting the progress of decay. Where all seemed prostration and death he had sown the seeds of energy and life; and they only required time and repose to grow and fructify. He deserves to be regarded as one of the greatest of the Sultans. Mahomet, when

he last shook the dust of Mecca from his feet, and first raised his standard amid the barren sands of Arabia, was not, apparently, engaged in a more hopeless cause than Mahmoud the Second when he resolved to make war on the corruptions, abuses, and prejudices of Turkey, to destroy the Janissaries, and to introduce the improvements of European civilisation into the Eastern Empire.

In 1839 that numerous race of political philosophers who only judge of such efforts by their immediate success, pronounced this work of regeneration to be a decided failure. Lord Palmerston was, however, not one of them. He had fully adopted those ideas which he still holds, and argued in 1839 as in 1853, that the condition of Turkey was not irremediable; that the signs of progress might be seen; and that with care, patience, and wisdom, the valour of the Mussulmans, under an enlightened administration, might yet constitute a formidable rampart against the ambition of Russia. And on this principle the English statesman acted.

Unfortunately the French Ministry had not the same far-sighted views. They believed that nothing could permanently save Turkey, and they considered Mehemet Ali the only man capable of successfully resisting the formidable northern Power. From this difference of opinion

sprung many future dissensions. But other powerful motives were also in operation. Since the acquisition of Algiers, an acquisition which the Deputies foolishly pledged themselves, in an answer to an address from the Throne, on no account to relinquish, they thought of gaining an influence in the East through Mehemet Ali, so as effectually to oppose the influence which Russia possessed through the Greek subjects of the Porte. A protectorate was to be met by a protectorate, and influence was to be arrayed against influence. To Frenchmen Egypt had peculiar associations. When Napoleon was tired with the monotony of Europe, it was to that country he turned with longing eyes and lofty aspirations, as the spot from which a new and mighty empire rivalling that of Alexander might radiate. It was there that he was encountered by the genius of England, and his gigantic projects crushed in the bud. From that time Frenchmen supposed that England herself had designs upon Egypt, and that her policy in the East was directed even by the mere instinct of self-preservation to this great object. It was in vain that our Ministers asserted that they did not wish for Egypt, that if it was offered to us we would not accept it, and that all we wanted in Egypt was a road.

These professions were answered by an incredulous smile. They were classed with the virtuous and humble declarations of the Emperor of Russia that he did not want Constantinople. The newspapers of Paris were full of such notions; and surely their editors may be excused for entertaining them, when the great Autocrat, up to the present time, and notwithstanding all his experience of our disinterestedness, had the same fixed idea. Egypt was the luring bribe he held out to Sir Hamilton Seymour, in order to induce the English Ministers to assist him in the partition of Turkey, when he thought the seasonable time had come.

The French Government may even be excused for despairing of the future of Turkey. Never, surely, was a great empire left in a more disastrous state. Abdul Medjid, a mere youth of seventeen, had just been seated on the tottering throne of his deceased father. His army was disorganised. Two or three weeks after his accession his fleet deserted to the enemy. There was discord among the ministers, discontent in the capital, and rebellion triumphant in Syria. The Russian troops and ships of war might at any moment appear in the Bosphorus, or at any moment Ibrahim Pasha might lead his forces to Constantinople. But one ray of hope

still beamed on that lowering horizon. The English fleet was in an efficient state ; the resolution of the English Minister was not doubted; the English admiral menaced Alexandria, and English men-of-war were standing off Tenedos. It was known in Constantinople, and what is more it was also known at Alexandria, at Sebastopol, and at St. Petersburg, that the moment a Russian squadron or the Egyptian troops approached Constantinople, Lord Palmerston had determined to force the Dardanelles, and that at any cost the flag of England should also wave in the sea of Marmora.

It is at such terrible conjunctures that the spirit of a statesman is shown. Then it is seen whether he has only capacity to drift on the current of events, or genius and courage to command those circumstances of which, with vacillation or feebleness, he must inevitably become the victim. And it is doing Lord Palmerston but scanty justice to acknowledge that with his colleagues trembling at the responsibilities they were sharing with him, coldly supported by his friends, in a minority in the Cabinet, and with the Government but dragging on its existence from day to day, he was fully equal to the occasion and gave no sign of wavering.

In council he was manfully seconded by Lord John Russell. But one of the Whig Ministers was not satisfied with a silent protest against his policy. Lord Holland still held his opinions of 1829. He still held all his prejudices against Turkey, and, there is reason to believe, was the cause of much embarrassment to the Foreign Secretary. He shared the sentiments of the French politicians with regard to Mehemet Ali, and gave to a French diplomatic agent private assurances which were widely different from all the public declarations of Lord Palmerston. Thus the French Ministers were misled, and the serious misunderstanding with England brought about. But Lord Holland died before these Eastern negotiations were concluded, and peace was fully established in the Levant. His speeches on the foreign policy of England should be studied by all who would follow the progress of opinion and the sentiments of parties throughout the last thirty years. He was an honest politician, a man of excellent intentions, a munificent patron of literature. But he scarcely deserved all the panegyrics which his friends have pronounced over his tomb, and hence their eulogies have been in a certain sense injurious to his fame. His posthumous publications have been severely criticised; and when read without that personal

interest which they acquired from the social qualities of their author, do not justify the claims which have been made to the approbation of posterity. Lord Holland was proud to acknowledge himself the pupil of Mr. Fox; and "Mr. Fox's pupil" he might be called even when he was a grey-haired old man. His mind never expanded beyond the confines of that select political circle of which he was so eminent a member. He never did justice to Edmund Burke, but had the same jealousy of that great man which Mr. Fox's political followers felt immediately after the publication of the Reflections on the French Revolution, and the consequent disruption of the Whig party.

Lord Holland's interference in this difference between Mehemet Ali and the Sultan was certainly pernicious. But for some time all promised well. France took the initiative in professing a desire to preserve the integrity and the independence of the Ottoman Empire. She stopped the march of Ibrahim Pasha; and the circular which was sent to her servants in the East by the French Government was admired and imitated by the other four Powers. It left nothing to be desired. A satisfactory termination to the troubles of Turkey seemed speedy and certain. The important note

addressed to the Porte when it was about to concede many of Mehemet Ali's demands, and which virtually placed the Sultan under the protection of all Europe, was believed to have been first suggested by France. It was certainly a great point gained, and one on which the Western Powers might sincerely congratulate each other. It was a surrender of the exclusive pretensions which Russia had so long made, and which she had secured by treaty at Unkiar Skelessi. The French fleet continued to cruise with the English in the Mediterranean; and the orders which Lord Palmerston sent to Admiral Stopford were previously transmitted to Paris for the consideration of the French Government.

Nothing could be more straightforward than the proceedings of the English Foreign Secretary. All that was necessary for firm union was corresponding openness and corresponding sincerity. Vienna was proposed as the place in which the plenipotentiaries of the five Powers were to deliberate on the Eastern question. But Russia had at that time an instinctive jealousy of the interference of Austria in Turkey, and at length it was agreed that London should be the seat of this great European conference. Had the French Ministry and the French nation been in a proper mood, they would have seen that the fact of the metro-

polis of England being chosen for the Congress when the Western Powers were closely united, was another and still more decisive advantage. But the French Ministry and the French nation were bent on being unreasonable. They were resolved to give Russia every opportunity for breaking that generous alliance founded on common interest and common freedom, which had for ten years excited her apprehension.

And this was the key to the moderation which the Emperor Nicholas then showed. He endeavoured by every means to gain the confidence of Lord Palmerston, or, at all events, to prevent him from taking any measures in the East decidedly hostile to Russia. To acquire the confidence of the Foreign Secretary was indeed impossible; but if the proposals of Russia were fair, he was surely not precluded, even by his alliance with France, from giving them his support. He had shown a determined hostility to the schemes of Nicholas in many ways, and in many lands. He had taken a resolute, and even menacing attitude. Russia had received from him, even since Mehemet Ali had renewed his efforts for independence, one of the sharpest of remonstrances. There was no mistaking the Note of October 26th, 1838, from Lord Palmerston, to our Ambassador at St. Petersburg. It

informed the Emperor of what he might expect from his intrigues in Persia, and what was the limit to the forbearance of England. The debates in Parliament since the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, had given the Minister a moral strength with which he could fearlessly undertake great things. The hour of action had arrived; there was the power of a great nation, and the ability and courage to use it well.

In the summer of 1839, the members of the Conference on Eastern Affairs assembled in London. Every effort was made to keep their deliberations secret; but it was soon known that there was a serious disagreement between France and the other four Powers, on the measures to be pursued for the support of the Sultan and the pacification of his dominions. The opinion of England had been long given, and had never varied. She regarded Mehemet Ali as a rebel, and considered his summary expulsion from Syria the first and essential element of a future peace. When he had restored the Turkish fleet, and evacuated the provinces he had wrongfully seized, then, and not until then, Lord Palmerston, said terms might be granted to him by which he could retain the hereditary pashalic of Egypt. The opinion of Austria was not widely diverse. Prince Metternich thought

the Sultan might again become master of Syria, either during Mehemet Ali's life, or at his death. Russia was ready to agree to either the plan of Austria, or that of England; and it cannot be denied, that the sacrifices she made, and the modest and dignified tone she then used, were highly creditable to the prudence and discretion of the Emperor, and contrasted painfully with the impracticability of the French Government. France had pledged herself to maintain the integrity and independence of the Sultan, and yet treated Mehemet Ali as his equal. She could not consent to use force against the Pasha. He might be persuaded to make "concessions." The French Ministers would use their influence over him for that purpose; but still he might retain the hereditary possession of Syria, and wield the power of that province for the defence of the Sultan, whom he would then be able and willing to shield from the attacks of all his enemies. France looked upon Mehemet Ali as the strong man in the East, who might play the same part towards the Sultan, as the Mayors of the Palace had once played to the effeminate and incompetent successors of Charlemagne.

This policy was based on two suppositions, both of which were wrong. It was assumed that Mehemet Ali's power was not a mere

anomaly, but a sound organic development which would continue to exist after he was in his grave, and that the Sultan and his Ministers, being incapable of conducting the administration, required a protector of some sort to preserve their empire from falling to pieces. Now Mehemet Ali was an old man; he was proverbially a merciless ruler; he cared nothing for the happiness of the people he governed; his dominion was simply founded on brute force; it had no moral cohesion, and was not likely to be handed down in its strength and integrity to his descendants. He was hated by the very people of whom liberal France wished to make him the perpetual master; his cruelty had driven them to desperation; rebellion had succeeded rebellion, and the Christian population of Syria especially shuddered at his present and prospective tyranny. Was it for such a person and for such a cause that the friendship of England was to be sacrificed? The Sultan was certainly weak, but it was Mehemet Ali who had made him weak. It was Mehemet Ali who, in 1833, had driven the Porte to accept the protection of Russia. It was Mehemet Ali who was now, by his vain and senile dreams of independence, jeopardising Turkey, and again giving the Emperor Nicholas the occasion, which

France so much feared, of sending his fleets and armies to Constantinople.

A more mistaken course of policy than that which the French press, and in consequence the French ministers, then advocated, was never adopted by a great nation. It alienated England without conciliating Russia. It united in opposition those who, like Lord Palmerston, believed that the Turkish Empire was capable of regeneration under the Sultan, and those who, like Count Nesselrode, wished to see the power of the Czar firmly extended to the Dardanelles.

Weeks slipped away, and the five Powers had come to no decisive resolution. Every effort to prevail on France to act in concert with the rest of Europe, had failed. Lord Palmerston had given the French ministers distinctly to understand, that if it was found impossible for France to unite with the other Powers, she was not to be surprised if they, at last, determined to act without her co-operation. Russia had taken pains to send Baron Brunnow on a special mission to England; the French Government well knew that he had arrived in London on the 15th of September, and they might have easily guessed that his object was to dissolve the alliance of the Western Powers. Common prudence might surely have

suggested the necessity of no longer standing aloof. Common sense might have shown that it was not likely four great nations would sacrifice their settled principles to the opinions of a single Power with whom they did not agree. But it was all vain. The statesmanship of France seemed spell-bound.

The accounts written by Baron Brunnow and Lord Palmerston of their conversations on the troubles of the East in the autumn of 1839 are very interesting and amusing. As the impracticability of France was established, the friendly professions of Russia to England increased. Baron Brunnow was all frankness and candour. He expressed the gratification of the Emperor on finding how little difference there was in the opinions of England and Russia on the affairs of the Levant. He was happy to find that Lord Palmerston now appeared to have more confidence than he had formerly professed in the good faith of Russia. The Emperor felt that he deserved this confidence. He wished to give the fullest explanations, and his earnest desire was to be on the most friendly terms with England. On the differences between the Pasha of Egypt and the Porte, his Imperial Majesty could have but one opinion. The Sultan was a sovereign and an ally; Mehemet Ali, a revolted subject.

All that was necessary for maintaining peace was that Russia and England should come to a clear understanding. They were the "two governments," * and the other Powers would agree to what they, when united, might determine. He highly approved of the coercive measures Lord Palmerston recommended. But if the coasts of Syria and Egypt were blockaded, and all the supplies of Ibrahim Pasha's army intercepted, might not he in a moment of desperation, as he had threatened, advance to the Bosphorus and overawe Constantinople? Was it not then necessary, Baron Brunnow said, that Russia and England should previously settle what course should be taken, and be fully prepared for such an emergency? The Emperor had a plan to propose which he had no doubt would be quite satisfactory and produce the happiest results. If England would agree to

* In the opinion of the Emperor Nicholas, there are ever only two Governments in the world. Whenever he has any flattering overtures to make, it is his custom to inform the ambassador of the state he desires to conciliate that there are only two Governments. Sometimes one of these Governments is England, sometimes the United States of America, and sometimes it is Prussia; but while the name of one of the Powers of which the Emperor condescends to acknowledge the existence, may vary according to circumstances, Russia is invariably the other, and remains, in his mind, the only perpetual and unchangeable Government.

it, Nicholas would pledge himself not to renew the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi, which he was aware had been regarded with much distrust. He would give assistance to the Sultan, not as under the obligations of that treaty, which however he still considered binding, but as the agent of the five Powers. His forces would be the forces of the alliance; as the forces of the alliance they would move to protect Constantinople, and as the forces of the alliance, when that service should be performed, they would retire. The other Powers would not of course remain inactive. A convention might settle what work France, Austria, and England should respectively execute. But, as a general rule, whatever was necessary to be done in Syria and Egypt, might be done by these three Powers, while all the operations requisite within the Straits and in Asia Minor, should be performed by Russia.

This was the proposition of his Imperial Majesty, communicated by Baron Brunnow to Lord Palmerston. Here was the explanation of the frank, candid, magnanimous, and disinterested professions of the Emperor of all the Russias. The gist of the matter was, that whatever might happen, England should confine herself to the Mediterranean, and that within the Dardanelles

Russia should have free scope to cement her power and extend her influence. It was the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi under another name, and with the difference that the Western Powers were to negotiate their own exclusion from the sea of Marmora, and permit Russia, with their eyes open, to be the ruler at Constantinople.

Lord Palmerston informed Baron Brunnow that the Government of this country fully reciprocated all the friendly declarations of the Emperor. But the Foreign Secretary had a slight modification to propose in the imperial plan. It was a very slight one; but if it could not be agreed to the English Minister would be reluctantly compelled to reject the propositions altogether. The moment that the Russian fleet entered the Bosphorus to defend the Sultan, the Dardanelles must also be opened, and a few English ships of war under their national flag also enter the waters of the Porte. They would not go to menace Russia, but merely to assert the principle that the Straits were not open to one European Power and shut to another.

Baron Brunnow was extremely sorry that this was the decision of the English Government. He had not received instructions on that particular point. He must refer it to the Emperor. But in the mean while much valuable time might be

lost. Could not something be decided? Could not England at once undertake decisive operations against Mehemet Ali, and leave the question of the Dardanelles and Bosphorus to be settled by a subsequent arrangement?

The Baron was pressing. He urged every argument to persuade Lord Palmerston to take some irrevocable step. But the minister was not to be deceived. Until Russia had agreed to allow the flag of England to appear in a certain part of the Sea of Marmora, should the necessity for such interference occur, Lord Palmerston would not permit himself to be inextricably involved in a series of measures on which the fate of Asia and of Europe depended. He was placed at that time in a most difficult situation. Ibrahim Pasha might appear with his victorious troops in the vicinity of Constantinople. Russia might pour her armies into Turkey. All this time Mehemet Ali was busily engaged in strengthening his position. The merciless conscription was actively going on; new battalions were daily drilled and paraded in the streets of Cairo; the united fleets of Turkey and Egypt were daily being made more efficient. Every day the necessity for immediate action was more imminent, yet every day the joint action of the five Powers, through the obstinacy of the French Ministers, was more hopeless. It

seemed as though Lord Palmerston would be obliged to quarrel with France, and yet have no definite agreement with Russia.

In the January of 1840, Baron Brunnow returned to England. He brought with him the consent of the Emperor to the alterations Lord Palmerston required in the original propositions. If events compelled Russia to send her armies and vessels to Constantinople, England and France might each send three line-of-battle ships through the Dardanelles. The firmness of the Foreign Secretary had prevailed. The treaty of Unkiar Skelessi was thus virtually abrogated and was not to be renewed. The concessions then made by the Emperor of Russia were not confined to England; all the advantages were equally to be shared by France.

But a ministerial crisis occurred in that kingdom. All negotiations were suspended from February to May. Lord Palmerston hoped that the new Ministry, when it was at length established, would be more conciliating; but in that hope he was disappointed. M. Thiers was not more inclined to coerce Mehemet Ali than Marshal Soult had been. For twelve months negotiations had been carried on, and yet no agreement was concluded; for twelve months France alone had prevented the action

of the rest of Europe; after twelve months of diplomacy it seemed that the five Powers were further from coming to a satisfactory arrangement than when the conference first met. In July 1839, France was the most eager for the common interference of Europe in the affairs of the East; but in July 1840, France had rejected every proposition which had been made to her, and she stood alone.

What was to be done? To wait for the adhesion of the French Government to the objects of the four Powers, would be waiting for what might never come. To inform M. Thiers of the intentions of the other courts might easily be construed into a menace, and would certainly give him an opportunity of warning Mehemet Ali of the designs against him, and cause the Pasha to be fully prepared to offer a determined resistance. The French telegraph would be immediately called into requisition, and probably the plan of the alliance frustrated. Contrary to the intentions of Lord Palmerston, some of the pacific projects to which France had been asked to agree, were sent to the Pasha of Egypt by the French Minister. The English statesman had also been informed from very different quarters, that the French ambassador at Constantinople was endeavouring to persuade the

Porte to accept the terms which Mehemet Ali had offered, independently of all communication with the Governments that had undertaken to settle the question. Reluctantly, but resolutely, Lord Palmerston came to a decision. On the 15th of July, just within the year from the time when the collective note of the five Powers was presented to the Porte, and the war between Mehemet Ali and the Sultan taken under the consideration of Europe, a Convention was signed between Russia, England, Prussia, and Austria, with the Sublime Porte, without the concurrence or the knowledge of France.

By this convention the fate of Mehemet Ali was decided. The combined Powers advised the Sultan to grant to the Pasha the hereditary possession of Egypt, the command for life of the fortress of St. Jean d'Acre, with the title of Pasha of Acre, and the administration of the south of Syria. If this arrangement was not accepted by Mehemet Ali in ten days after it had been communicated to him, he was only to be offered the Pashalic of Egypt, which if he did not accept before the expiration of the ten following days he would be offered no terms whatever, but have to abide the fortune of war, and the united strength of the European sovereigns.

Two days after this important document was signed, a memorandum was delivered to M. Guizot, the French ambassador in London, informing him of what had been decided, and expressing the regret of the other Powers that they had been compelled to come to such a determination without the assent of France. The effect on the minds of our ardent neighbours was electric. Their pride and vanity were deeply wounded ; and stimulated by all the organs of their Government, they seemed almost frenzied. Just before the prorogation of Parliament in the autumn, Lord Palmerston in the House of Commons gave an explanation of his conduct, and laid all the blame on the French Ministry. He had not isolated France ; France had isolated herself. She would not act with the other Powers ; they had therefore at last been obliged to act without her. No effort had been spared to prevail on her to join with them; project after project, proposition after proposition, had been made to her, but all in vain. A plan founded on the suggestion of General Sébastiani himself, the late French ambassador, had even been offered at last by the English Foreign Secretary, but that also was rejected. Lord Palmerston deeply regretted that he could not induce France to unite with the other Go-

vernments, but after so much time had been lost, and when the state of the East was so precarious, he could take no other course. He had none but friendly feelings towards France. He regarded her alliance as of inestimable value.

This speech, far from calming the irritation of the French people, only made them still more furious. It was pouring oil upon fire; the flame blazed fiercer and fiercer. M. Thiers' conduct at that time was little creditable to his wisdom or his philanthropy. Before he was placed in the responsible position he then occupied, he had spoken eloquently in favour of the continuance of the alliance with England. He had even confessed that France and England had opposite views on the Syrian question, but that it was only as the negotiations proceeded, and the sentiments of the two Governments were explained, that the attachment of France to Mehemet Ali had been disclosed. But now his vanity was incensed. He had prided himself on his genius for foreign policy; he had supposed that he could oblige the English Minister to follow him in his course; and he had been wrong in all his calculations. He did not think it unworthy of him as the head of the Government, to rouse by every means the passions of the multitude, and to precipitate his country into a war with all Europe,

but especially with England. He made immense preparations for a great European conflict, spoke in the tone of a braggadocio, and thought that he could intimidate Lord Palmerston from carrying out the line of policy which he had pledged himself and his country to follow.

Had the Foreign Secretary been a weak or hesitating minister, he might have trembled at the difficulties by which he was environed; he might have sacrificed the interests of Turkey, and degraded himself in the eyes of all Europe without conciliating M. Thiers and his extravagant admirers. The French Minister had always asserted that the measures of coercion which Great Britain might take on the coast of Syria and Egypt would fail. He expected the Pasha to offer a successful resistance to the English forces; he hoped that France might then be called in as a mediator; that by her interposition the dominion of Mehemet Ali over Syria would be secured, and the French influence completely established along the shores of the Mediterranean.

In a despatch to Mr. Bulwer, dated August 31st, Lord Palmerston fully vindicated the course which he had taken, and proved M. Thiers to be hopelessly in the wrong. This able paper was printed and sent to all the courts

of Europe. It greatly increased the reputation of the Minister, and satisfied all candid minds of the fairness and ability with which he had conducted those difficult negotiations. M. Thiers' reply to this public document was feeble and inconsistent; it only proved that he had never had a definite policy. The quibbling spirit in which he attempted to argue that the integrity and independence of the Ottoman Empire only meant the frustration of the plans of Russia and not the preservation of the Porte from the ambition of Mehemet Ali, was utterly unworthy of a statesman.

Lord Palmerston was not deterred by all the menaces of the French Minister, nor by all the excitement of the French people, from executing what he had determined. The energy and rapidity with which the operations were conducted offered a singular contrast to the long and tedious delays which France had caused before a final decision could be made. The work of the diplomatist had now ended; the time for action had arrived. It was now to be seen how far M. Thiers' repeated assertions of the inefficiency of the means with which Lord Palmerston proposed to reduce Mehemet Ali to submission, were correct; and whether success was to crown, or defeat to stigmatise, the policy

which the English Minister had adopted. It was indeed a moment of tremendous responsibility. The power and ability of Mehemet Ali were undoubtedly great. The peace of all Europe now depended on the speedy and complete success of our sailors and marines on the coast of Syria. One mistake, one moment of vacillation, and in the existing state of the French nation, all Europe would spring to arms. With the love for peace which was professed by so many respectable politicians, dismissal, disgrace, and even impeachment might be the fate of the brilliant statesman who failed in such a bold stroke of policy. The Duke of Marlborough in the battle-field when the bullets rained most thickly, never showed more bravery than Lord Palmerston as he calmly awaited, in the unimaginative atmosphere of Downing Street, the issue of his great combination, and the proverbial hazards of war.

No time was lost. Mehemet Ali was immediately informed of the terms which the Sultan, by the advice of the four Powers, was disposed to grant. He endeavoured to negotiate directly at Constantinople. His proposals were not accepted; and without consulting the allies, the government of the Porte pronounced his formal deposition from the Pashalic of Egypt. Of this

step Lord Palmerston disapproved; and assurances were given to France that it was not to be considered a final sentence. The coasts of Syria and Egypt were declared to be in a state of blockade. Admiral Stopford, with the British fleet, some Turkish vessels, and two Austrian frigates, approached Beyrout. After a bombardment of four days, Soliman Pacha, with the Egyptian troops under his command, was compelled to evacuate the town. Commodore Napier took Sidon by storm, and ever ready for action either by sea or land, advanced into the mountains and defeated Ibrahim Pasha. The Lebanon was soon cleared, Ibrahim's army, from which France expected so much, dispersed, and himself a fugitive. But the most illustrious and decisive exploit of all was the capture of the great and, it was deemed, impregnable fortress of St. Jean d'Acre, the key to all the military positions of Syria and to the Empire of the East. To the surprise of all the world and to the incredulous wonder of the population of Syria and Egypt, it was taken by the British squadron after a bombardment of three hours. At two o'clock in the afternoon the firing commenced; at five it ceased, and the Egyptian troops began rapidly to leave the town which had been reduced in a short time, so destructive

had been the fire of the ships, to a heap of smoking and blackened ruins. The next morning the fortress was formally restored by the English Commodore to the authority of the Sultan.

This series of rapid, brilliant, and triumphant actions effectually did Mehemet Ali's business. In two months the bugbear which to France appeared of such portentous magnitude had been made, by the genius and vigour of the English Foreign Secretary, and the skill and valour of the English sailors, to dwindle into very harmless dimensions. England had put forth her strength for a moment, and only for a moment: and the greatness of Mehemet Ali, and the impending political convulsions of the East, had vanished before it like a dream. The means which M. Thiers had but a few months before pronounced quite inadequate to the purposes in view, had proved quite sufficient. Even the dreaded advance of the Russian forces to Constantinople had been avoided, and all necessity for such interference obviated. By insisting that England should send three ships of war through the Dardanelles whenever the Russian fleet entered the Bosphorus, Lord Palmerston had given Russia a powerful motive for not acting at all except in the last extremity. The Russian fleet was lying

idly at Sebastopol while the English squadron was acting so decisively in Syria.

Before all the operations against Mehemet Ali had been undertaken, M. Thiers, happily for the peace of the world, ceased to be prime minister of France. On the bombardment of Beyrout he asked the King to sanction the immediate completion of the armament, the speedy convocation of the Chambers, and the departure of the fleet for Alexandria, to give by its presence what he termed, a moral support to Mehemet Ali. The King of the French, as anxious for the maintenance of peace as his prime minister was eager for war, rejected these demands. The Ministry resigned. By the mediation of the Duke of Broglie the quarrel was for the moment patched up; but when the time for the preparation of the King's speech drew near, the ministers again renewed their proposals which were again rejected; and the Ministry finally retired. M. Guizot was sent for from London, and a cabinet in which he held the office of Foreign Secretary, and Marshal Soult those of President of the Council and Minister of War, was formed. As M. Guizot had always been warmly attached to England, these ministerial changes were considered favourable to the maintenance of peace.

But it is right to acknowledge that to Louis Philippe the chief merit is due of having prevented the breaking out of hostilities. Since it will be necessary to speak of the policy which he pursued some years later with strong disapprobation, it is only just to allow him the glory of endeavouring at this moment of frenzy to bring the French nation into a better temper, and of discountenancing the violent schemes of his ministers. Louis Philippe lived to be a recreant to honourable, just, and liberal principles. He lived to be the enemy of Lord Palmerston, who would not support his selfish plans for the aggrandisement of his family. He lived to be in his old age an outcast and a wanderer, and his bones are buried in a foreign soil. But Englishmen, as they look upon his tomb and reflect on the vanity of all earthly grandeur, may forgive the errors and crimes which the King of the French committed in the last years of his reign, on remembering the words he uttered at Boulogne, when the cry for war against "perfidious Albion" was resounding throughout France. "As long as I live," said he, "there shall be peace between France and England."

The excitement was beginning to subside. Other subjects of interest were dividing the at-

tention of the gallant nation with the slights which it imagined the honour of France had received in the Eastern dispute. The wickedness of Madame Laffarge made the Parisians partly forget the wickedness of Lord Palmerston. The Chambers had assembled, the new Ministry were successful in every division, when the news of the capture of Acre arrived in Paris, and once more drove the French people almost beside themselves with rage and mortification. This was the very fortress which, when defended by Sir Sidney Smith and his brave seamen, had resisted all the efforts of Napoleon, and stopped the conqueror in his victorious career. In 1799 Buonaparte had himself confessed that in this town the fate of the East was involved; in 1840 the success of the campaign in Syria depended on the impression which the English cannon might make on the same battlements. Its capture by Napier was as fatal to the power of Mehemet Ali as its defence by Sir Sidney Smith had been to the destiny of Napoleon. But it had resisted Napoleon and his triumphant legions for many weeks; the siege had been conducted on the most scientific principles; torrents of blood were shed and prodigies of French valour performed. From an attack which had not lasted one autumn afternoon, Acre had now

fallen. Such success seemed miraculous. Lord Palmerston for a short time was to the French nation what he is still to General Count Ficquelmont, a devil in human form, whose machinations were execrable, but whose power was irresistible.

It was well that M. Guizot could reply to all the remonstrances of the advocates of war that Mehemet Ali's expulsion from Syria was an accomplished fact. Had the struggle been protracted, had the Pasha been in any degree successful, both the King of the French and his philosophical minister might have been unable to resist the popular torrent which was rushing so furiously to war. It was the reliance upon the support of France which had made Mehemet Ali, when his strength was still unbroken, persist in his pretensions. Now, however, France counselled submission and the Eastern difficulty rapidly approached its termination.

Napier, covered with the laurels he had so recently won, appeared off Alexandria. He entered into a convention with Mehemet Ali, by which the Pasha agreed to evacuate Syria and deliver up the Turkish fleet as soon as he was officially assured that the Sultan had granted to him the hereditary possession of Egypt. The Porte, however, was now inflated with victory,

and for a time refused to reinstate Mehemet Ali in the Government of Egypt. Admiral Stopford, Napier's superior officer, also thought that the hero of Acre had gone beyond his powers in signing the Convention, and refused to sanction the arrangement. A mischievous delay might have occurred. But Mehemet Ali was dispirited and overawed. He was informed by the authority of the English Government that he would be maintained in the pashalic of Egypt if he would within three days evacuate Syria and surrender the Turkish fleet. He professed his entire submission, and threw himself at the feet of the Allied Powers. Some perplexing difficulties still remained at Constantinople, but they were merely technical; Mehemet Ali was defeated, Syria restored to the Sultan, the east tranquillised: Lord Palmerston had triumphed.

And now nothing remained but to restore the good relations with France which in the course of these eventful negotiations had been unfortunately interrupted. In a few months this also was accomplished. On the 13th of July 1841, a treaty which Lord Palmerston regarded as an act of reconciliation between France and the rest of Europe was concluded.

This celebrated document, on which so much has depended and may yet depend, was not prolix.

In 1809 England bound herself to respect the sanctity of the Dardanelles which she had forced some time before, and agreed that no ships of war under her flag should enter the straits without the consent of the Porte. So far as England was concerned the treaty therefore left matters just as they had previously been. But now the other Powers took the same engagement. Russia also made a general renunciation of any intention of obtaining an exclusive ascendancy in Turkey. The integrity and independence of that state was declared by the five Powers to be of essential importance to the world, and the Ottoman Empire was formally taken under the protection of all Europe.

This was the spirit and plain meaning of the treaty of 1841, about which so much has been said and written. Lord Palmerston has positively asserted it to be, what all the statesmen of Europe at the time considered it, a complete abandonment on the part of Russia of the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. He believed that it settled the relations of the Ottoman Empire with the Governments of Europe, on a much more satisfactory foundation than had ever before been established. In fact, until now, Russia was the only one of the great Powers of Europe which could justly be thought to have had a policy in the East; the

other Governments had left the fate of Turkey to be decided by the chapter of accidents. The consequence was that Russia had nearly gained everything, and Western Europe almost lost everything. The treaty of the 13th of July — July seems to have been with our statesmen the chosen month for treaties on the affairs of Turkey — did do much for Europe, if it did not do all that sagacious and far-sighted statesmen might think necessary for permanent tranquillity. What it accomplished, it accomplished without war. It was essentially a pacific arrangement. Without rousing the apprehensions of Russia, it put into a definite shape the fears and the hopes of Europe, and thus indicated the means and provided the nucleus of a better system than had yet been thought possible.

The way to judge of the value of this treaty and of the ability of the British Minister whose name is attached to it, is not to examine it by any abstract principles of what may be necessary after a war for the security of Europe and the independence of Turkey; but to compare it with the treaties of Adrianople and Unkiar Skelessi, and with the chaotic state of things which it superseded. In an indirect manner it did carry out the design which Prince Metternich entertained in 1828, of placing the integrity of the

Ottoman Empire under the public guarantee of the Great Powers. If allowance be made for the circumstances of the time, this treaty may well be acknowledged to be one of the most masterly achievements of an English statesman. The principle it contained, though imperfectly developed, was of universal application. It might easily be extended; it could not, without a violation of the public law of Europe, be set aside. Before this treaty was agreed to, whatever step Russia might take in the East was a mere question of policy and of convenience; she could now make no attempt on the independence of the Porte without breaking her plighted faith, and giving all the other four Powers a right, which would become a duty, to oppose her by force of arms. The present alliance of the Western Powers and the nominal adhesion of the German Courts to their principles, are indeed the necessary results of this Treaty of 1841.

Throughout the two years this Eastern crisis continued, Mr. Urquhart was eloquently prophesying that Lord Palmerston would betray Turkey to Russia. Now that it was terminated, Mehemet Ali beaten, and the treaty ratified, it was necessary he should justify himself in the eyes of the multitude by showing that his pro-

pheeies had been fulfilled. He affirmed that the clause prohibiting the ships of war of the five Powers from entering either the Straits of the Bosphorus or the Dardanelles in a time of peace without the consent of the Sultan, was all that Russia required, and instead of abrogating, really confirmed, the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi. Some politicians, who are by no means inclined to agree with Mr. Urquhart in other respects, have also, since the commencement of the present war, expressed their dissatisfaction with this diplomatic work of Lord Palmerston, and have thought that the Dardanelles and the Black Sea should be open at all times to the fleets of France and England. They have even gone so far as to say with Mr. Urquhart, that nothing more would be necessary for destroying the ascendancy of Russia and frustrating her designs in the East, because with the Black Sea and the Straits once free, everything else must inevitably follow.

This question is of so much importance that it is quite necessary it should be thoroughly understood. Unless just ideas are entertained upon it, all the sacrifices and exertions the people of France and England are making will be in vain. It is not by any means the simple matter which it at first sight appears. In con-

senting to the exclusion of ships of war from the Dardanelles, Lord Palmerston did nothing more than acknowledge the right of the Sultan to the control of the stream which was bounded on both sides by Turkish territories. The principle on which he acted, and which he took care to explain to Baron Brunnow, can scarcely be questioned by those who represent themselves as especially the friends of Turkey. It was this, that as the jurisdiction of every state extended to three miles beyond low-water mark, and as the Dardanelles and the Bosphorus were in general not more than six miles wide, the authority of the Porte was by international law unquestionable over both these Straits, which were at once the keys of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. Yet the politicians who are so anxious at once to defend Turkey and see the Black Sea open to the line-of-battle ships of all the world, must commence to carry their theories into practice by abrogating this right of the Sultan over his own seas. A singular method of securing the integrity of the Ottoman Empire, and of doing away with all foreign interference which is said to have done so much mischief!

And is it so certain that should these Straits become a highway to the navies of all nations,

that the advantages would be all on the side of the Western Powers? The same arrangement which would give the right of entrance to the Black Sea to France and England, would give the same right of entrance into the Mediterranean to Russia. Russian ships of war might then, according to this notable plan for protecting Turkey, anchor at any time under the walls of the Seraglio, overawe Constantinople, and command the windows of every drawing room. A pleasant spectacle for the idle gazers from the banks of the Bosphorus! An admirable sedative to the placid dreamers on a Turkish divan! A sure way of providing for all contingencies!

The most powerful state in the world would be ruined by such means of strengthening it. No plan was ever less adapted for the safety of such an empire as that of Turkey, with insurrections so frequently arising in the capital. The best course to adopt may be doubtful; but with the naval forces of Russia still powerful in the Black Sea, there can be no doubt that this arrangement would be the worst. On such a question it is impossible at the present moment to express a decided opinion. It demands the gravest attention of statesmen. But in 1841 the power of Russia in the Black Sea was pre-

ponderant, and every candid person must conclude that Lord Palmerston did the best he could under the circumstances in agreeing to the treaty. The terms were not indeed equitable; to have made them in any degree fair, the entrance to the Dardanelles should have been made to depend on the passage of the Pruth by Russia, or on the event of any invasion of Turkish territories. But this inequality was partly obviated by the declaration of the five Powers in favour of the independence and integrity of Turkey. The Sultan might now, when any attack was threatened, call for the assistance of his allies, and open the Dardanelles to the fleets. Had France acted cordially with England throughout the two years of negotiation, there can be no doubt that even in 1841, still more advantages might have been acquired. But as, through no fault of Lord Palmerston, the union of the two Western Powers had been broken, it cannot be denied that unsupported as he was, he made the best of the occasion. To all sagacious observers it was evident that the English statesman was pressing Russia hard; and that ever since the treaty of Unkiar Skelessi the Emperor Nicholas was losing his exclusive hold on Turkey. It was a great diplomatic error indeed to force the treaty of

Unkiar Skelessi on the Sultan at all. It at once showed the Governments of Europe their danger, and suggested the means of prevention.

There was no doing away with the immense moral effect which the brilliant naval operations in Syria had produced on the excitable minds of the natives of the East. The fall of Acre had astounded them; in the tents of the Arabs the names of Palmerston and England were whispered with fear and reverence. Who could measure the strength of that nation, which had so easily and so rapidly accomplished such mighty results? Unaccustomed to enter into reasons of state, they only judged by what they had witnessed. They saw that Russia remained quiescent, while England acted with energy and decision; and the star of the Emperor Nicholas seemed pale to their wondering gaze, while that of Queen Victoria shone upon them brightly and gloriously from the western heaven.

But it was not in the East alone that the vigour and success of Lord Palmerston's Foreign Policy had worked a great change in the minds of men. Englishmen have naturally much patriotism. They now forgot their mere party prejudices in hearty admiration of the Foreign Secretary of the Melbourne Government. Lord Palmerston had gradually risen in public estima-

tion, as his colleagues had declined. In 1831 his claim to such an important office, as that of the Secretaryship for Foreign Affairs, had been questioned. Ten years had passed away, and the popularity of the great chiefs of the first Reform Ministry had departed. They had quarrelled among themselves; some of them had gone over to the Conservative benches; the credit for statesmanship of the remaining Whig statesmen had long been on the wane. Lord Palmerston, whom they once patronised, was now their mainstay. While the Ministry was breaking up, the Foreign Secretary preserved his reputation undamaged in the general wreck.

On domestic questions the greatest differences of opinion prevailed in Parliament. The country was tired of the long dominion of the Whigs. They were assailed, it must be admitted, with much unfairness; they suffered much unmerited obloquy. It was easy to find fault with them, but not so easy to substitute better measures than those which they, in their last extremity, proposed for the consideration of the nation. But the people were not yet prepared to appreciate the commercial policy of the Ministers. The finances were in a most unsatisfactory state. The weakness of the Government was plain to every understanding. Jealous and powerful in-

terests, trembling with selfish anxiety for their monopolies, threw all their weight into the scale of the Opposition.

Six weeks and four days after the Treaty of the 13th of July was signed, the Whig Ministry, in consequence of their defeat on the Address, retired. This is a fact of no slight importance in estimating the many obstacles which Lord Palmerston had surmounted. He knew not how long he might continue Foreign Secretary. The Ministry might resign office at any time. On any day the superintendence of these intricate negotiations might be handed over to another statesman; but he had no reason to complain of his countrymen. He was enthusiastically applauded by the whole nation. Faction for a moment forgot to howl. Malevolence was silent. Even the rage of those great egotisms called "great interests," was not directed against the Foreign Secretary. Whigs and Tories, Protectionists and Free Traders, joined with one voice in admiration of the statesman who had acted so intrepidly and wisely, the leading part in that great emergency. He stood forth from among his humble and defeated colleagues, as the representative of a great national policy. In an age priding itself on its economical and prosaic disposition, he had given to the Foreign Policy of England something of a

heroic character. He had shown that, even in the present state of Europe, with Governments existing on no principle, and adopting the poorest means for attaining the most paltry ends, an English statesman, if he were worthy of his calling and of the great nation which he professed to govern, might still, by commanding energy, make other rulers, even in their own despite, obey his impulse, and cause his power and will to be felt and respected to the farthest limits of the civilised world.

CHAP. IX.

THE POWER OF ENGLAND. — EXTENT OF DOMINION. — DISPUTES WITH AMERICA. — NORTHERN BOUNDARIES. — RIGHT OF SEARCH. — TREATY OF WASHINGTON. — INVASION OF AFFGHANISTAN. — CONSIDERATION OF INDIAN POLICY.

THE Foreign Secretary of this great empire ought to possess superhuman faculties. So extensive are the dominions over which he must exert some kind of presiding influence, that he ought to know everything, to see everything, to be present everywhere and at all times. Seated in Downing Street he has to look down from his lofty elevation with serene and affable dignity on all the provinces and dominions under the sway of his Royal Mistress.

Much ingenuity and eloquence has been displayed in picturing the mighty power of the Emperor of Russia, extending so far from north to south, from east to west. His dominion may be mighty, and may menace the independence of the Western states and the balance of power in

Europe. It has rapidly increased, and ought now, when the opportunity presents itself, to be diminished. But we must not delude ourselves. It is possible to present a sketch of the territorial, political, and commercial greatness of England quite as imposing as that with which our minds have been dazzled of the greatness of the Autocrat of all the Russias.

At this very time Mehemet Ali was not the only potentate who learnt from experience the might of England. While the negotiations and demonstrations relating to the Turkish Empire were in progress, we had other work on our hands. Our soldiers were entering Candahar and Ghuznee; our sailors were approaching Canton and disturbing the august slumbers of his celestial majesty. Chinese mandarins were drowning themselves and cutting their own throats in despair at the terrible spectacle of the efforts of the English barbarians, when the wonderful tidings of the capture of Acre were being carried from caravan to caravan, from camel-driver to camel-driver in the Great Desert.

So transcendently was the military and naval power of England exerted in the different parts of the globe that French and American politicians were filled with envy. Their language with respect to England indeed curiously resembles that

of Mr. Urquhart with respect to Russia. The right of search had long been to them the cause of much suspicious animosity. They pointed to our African squadron as an instrument for extending our commerce, and not as a proof of our love for suffering humanity. The philanthropy of England was in their opinion mere hypocrisy. England had military stations in all parts of the globe; by the fortress of Gibraltar and Malta, her occupation of the Ionian Islands, and her successes in Syria, she was now the undisputed mistress of the Mediterranean. She was omnipotent in India; but not content with her Eastern empire, she was now meditating the conquest of China. By the possession of St. Helena and the Cape of Good Hope, all the commerce along those boundless shores became her own. The Falkland Islands secured to her all the trade passing round Cape Horn. Trinidad gave her all that was necessary for exclusive dominion in the Caribbean Sea. She was armed at all points. She never rested, never hesitated, but was ever pushing onward without fear and without rashness; relying on the wisdom of her statesmen, the energy of her people, and the valour of her armies.*

* This is no exaggeration of the jealous feeling prevalent in the United States and in France at this period. It is a

Such were the ideas then entertained of the British power by statesmen in Paris and Washington. There was something unworthy of two great nations in this petty jealousy; but they had some excuse for the feeling. The convention of the 15th of July 1840, though at length acquiesced in by the French Government, was neither forgotten nor forgiven. With the United States we had many disputed questions, some of which dated from the treaty by which their independence was acknowledged by England, in 1783.

There were others of more recent origin. The right of search as it affected the vessels sailing under the flag of the United States in the African seas, had grown up since England had commenced her crusade against slavery; but it might be considered as the mere assertion, in a different form, and in a time of peace, of what we had formerly maintained in a time of war. This difference was not, like some others, merely between the United States and England. Lord Palmerston had zealously exerted himself to get all nations to acknowledge this right of search, by treaty; it was admitted to be a violation of strict international law; and that no slaver of any nation

literal representation of facts as they are expressed in a report of a Committee on Foreign Affairs to the House of Representatives, U. S., 13th of February, 1841.

could be captured by a British ship of war unless a treaty on the subject had been signed by that particular power. With the extension of constitutional freedom this right had been extended. They went, such was Lord Palmerston's indefatigable energy, hand in hand together.

In 1831 and 1833, when the friendship of England was of so much importance to the struggling constitutional monarchy of France, the government of the king of the French had consented to a partial recognition of the right. Another treaty of a much more decided nature was being negotiated, when the disagreement on the affairs of Turkey broke out; but this business was brought to a stand, and when Lord Palmerston left office, had not been finally settled. The admission of the right of search was considered as one of the tacit obligations which nations contracted when they were assisted by the English minister in their constitutional attempts, and their governments could not do less than acknowledge it, though not always with the best grace. Prussia, Austria, and Russia were not likely to have any of their subjects engaged in the slave-trade, and they at last consented to agree to the same treaty. But what the despots of the Old World agreed to on behalf of the slave, the enlightened republicans of the new

pertinaciously refused to concede. The truth of the matter was just as Lord Palmerston declared it to be; it was not so much the honour of the American flag as the institution of slavery itself, which was thus indirectly but stubbornly upheld. None can doubt this opinion on perusing attentively the despatches of American statesmen. Mr. Webster, the able advocate of the sanctity of the stars and stripes, expressed, even in his correspondence with English ministers, sentiments which those who believe, as every christian man in this country now happily does, legalised slavery to be contrary to every moral and religious principle, cannot read without horror. In fact, if there was any hypocrisy associated with this right of search it was not that of England who wished to maintain it, but that of the southern states of the Union, who most indignantly resisted it, and covered their selfish interests, narrow prejudices, and foul tyranny over their fellow creatures with the flag which was the symbol of their national honour.

In the social condition of the United States, and with their deeply-rooted jealousy of England, this question was sufficiently serious. But there were disputes of a different kind which had been exaggerated by national susceptibility to such a magnitude as to disturb the pacific relations of

the two countries. The northern boundaries had never been precisely defined; and statesmen, in the spirit of antiquaries, set themselves gravely to interpret the treaty of 1783 to gratify the pretensions of their countrymen. That treaty was drawn up by men who were entirely ignorant of the territories whose limits they attempted to settle; nor was this ignorance surprising, when the inhabitants of Maine and New Brunswick, when the difference was so loudly canvassed both in England and America, were quite as ignorant.

In 1830, Lord Aberdeen and the President of the United States had agreed to submit the points in dispute to an arbitrator; and the king of the Netherlands was chosen for the honourable office of deciding the subject at issue between two great nations. The king of the Netherlands was as much perplexed as the British and American diplomatists had been from the want of all satisfactory knowledge of the unexplored regions. He however made his award. Lord Palmerston on coming into office was prepared to accept this decision. But difficulties intervened from the other side of the Atlantic, and this arbitration came to nothing. A joint commission was proposed by the President of the United States, and after a voluminous correspondence in 1837 and

1838, Lord Palmerston believed that it would be adopted. But on sending the draft of a convention to regulate proceedings, to America, he found that the ministers of the United States considered it unsatisfactory. The regulations which they in return proposed were not accepted by Lord Palmerston; and he at last sent out a commission of his own to New Brunswick for examining the disputed territory. The British commissioners reported strongly in favour of the British claims.

But had they intended to write a satire showing the contemptible nature of the controversy which threatened to hurry two great nations, connected by so many sacred ties, into a bloody and ruinous war, rather than a topographical description of the regions through which the boundary line was supposed to pass, they could not, by the utmost efforts of imagination, have said any thing more to the purpose than what was contained in some of the opening paragraphs of their report to the Foreign Secretary.

They found the land a wilderness. Maps could teach them nothing. A few American settlers whom they met in particular neighbourhoods could teach them nothing. Nothing was known of the country nor of the sources of the river which watered the territory. Some Indian

hunters only occasionally broke the silence and desolation of the wild expanse. It was not from the ardent republicans of Maine, nor from the hardy agriculturists of New Brunswick, that any information could be obtained. Two intelligent Indians whom the commissioners fortunately enlisted in their service, and who from having once hunted over these grounds possessed rude maps made by their own hands out of sheets of bark, were their sole guides in latitudes where no civilised man had ever before set his foot. They had scarcely concluded their labours when the winter set in with such violence that the industrious and patriotic commissioners were glad to make the best of their way homeward, to draw up their report in the more comfortable quarters of the Foreign Office.*

The correspondence on the right of search and the north-eastern boundary was still going on and rapidly increasing in bulk when Lord Aberdeen again accepted the post of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs in the government of Sir Robert Peel. He fully adopted the arguments Lord Palmerston had used on the right of search. He disclaimed, as Lord Palmerston had

* Report of G. W. Featherstonhaugh, and Rich. J. Mudge, Commissioners, to Lord Palmerston, April 16th, 1840.

disclaimed, any right of searching American vessels, as such. But he maintained, as Lord Palmerston had maintained, that a visit from an English man-of-war to ascertain that a vessel really belonged to the nation whose colours she hoisted, was no violation of international law, and could afford no just ground of complaint. Much, however, was said on both sides. If one mail took out an able paper from the English minister, another soon brought back a scarcely less able reply from the other side of the Atlantic. There seemed to be no end to written arguments. But it was quite necessary that something satisfactory should at length be decided upon. In the unsettled state of the negotiations events were every day occurring more and more perilous to the friendship of England and the United States. Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen determined to send out a special ambassador, invested with full powers to negotiate a treaty on the two questions of the right of search and the boundary between New Brunswick and the States. Their choice of a plenipotentiary indicated the pacific spirit in which they had resolved to settle this troublesome business. Lord Ashburton had been the most eminent merchant of the most eminent mercantile country

in the world. He had evinced, when the last war between the two nations was begun, his sympathy for the United States; his ideas on colonial questions were known to be extremely liberal. He sailed from England on his mission of peace in February 1842, and in a few weeks landed safely at New York.

The vanity of the citizens of the Union was gratified by the arrival of this special ambassador from England. He was applauded and entertained with much enthusiasm. By the 9th of August the treaty of Washington was signed between Mr. Webster and Lord Ashburton, and the ratifications were to be exchanged at London in a few weeks.

If slavery could be put down by words, nothing could be more satisfactory, as certainly nothing ever breathed a loftier moral tone, than some of the introductory passages of this treaty. Clarkson and Wilberforce might have exulted over the preamble. But if the evils generated by the practice of diplomatists could be eradicated by their saintly professions, this would be a beautiful world indeed. Who could suppose from the pious and mystical declarations in the bond which incorporated the Holy Alliance, that it was a mere instrument of some selfish and unscrupulous despots who had leagued themselves

together against their own subjects for the worst purposes of tyranny? Who could suppose from the treaty of Washington, in which the traffic in slaves is stigmatised as "criminal," in which the United States and England bind themselves to maintain an armanent of not less than eighty guns on the coast of Africa for its suppression, and in which they agree to remonstrate with the powers in whose territories slave markets are held, that one of these two nations had a most barbarous system of legalised slavery in its own dominions, and that one of the statesmen whose names were attached to it was in favour of its continuance? The right of search is not once mentioned in the treaty. It was neither abandoned nor admitted. The general declaration against slavery expressed in the treaty of Ghent, were reasserted with the additional clause for the maintenance of a certain force.

But Lord Ashburton cannot be blamed for not obtaining better conditions for the slave. He only conformed to those circumstances to which all statesmen must more or less submit. The most stringent treaty with the United States for the suppression of slavery must be useless as long as slavery, as an institution, exists in the great republic. It is beginning at the wrong end. It is not on the high seas, but in the Southern

States of the Union that the first effectual blow at the existence of slavery can be struck. As long as there is a demand for negroes, notwithstanding the resolutions of Exeter Hall and the humanity of British legislators, the market will be supplied. As it is, while we domineer over the slave-traders of Spain and other humble nations, we are really coercing the weak, and allowing the great sinner, because he is strong, to go scot free.

By the first seven articles of the treaty this northern boundary was at last defined, and all apprehensions of war arising from this dispute were extinguished for ever. This is the consolatory fact, in comparison with which, the question whether England conceded more than she justly ought to have done, is a very trifling one.

The treaty was, however, strongly attacked by the Opposition in the session of 1843. The Ministers had humiliated England. They had sacrificed all the points at issue in order to maintain peace. The honour of England had been disregarded by Lord Ashburton and Lord Aberdeen. These are the vulgar cries of all oppositions when peace by mutual concession has been preserved. Their value on this occasion must be judged by the value of the desolate regions through which the boundary line had

been drawn. Lord Palmerston's objections were indeed expressed with consummate ability, and were in the abstract not inappropriate. Undue concession certainly does occasionally endanger rather than secure peace.

Yet it would seem that when a nation is to make a stand it should be for something really tangible; when a great people takes up arms it ought to be for something worth fighting for. There is a dignity in concession as well as in resistance. When the difference is about such barren territories as those from which Her Majesty's commissioners were nearly frozen out, there is as much glory in yielding some points for the sake of a permanent settlement, as in leaving the whole dispute open to the uncertain contingencies of the future. But that there had been no unworthy concessions must be evident from the fact that the terms agreed upon were more favourable to England than those which the King of the Netherlands had formerly awarded: and at that time even Lord Palmerston, who now blamed the treaty of Washington, was ready to accept that judgment.

England had then enough of wars on her hands. She dictated a glorious peace in China, and made a most advantageous commercial treaty with that self-complacent empire. The

dark clouds which had been lowering over our Indian dominions ever since the government of Sir Robert Peel entered office, were being gloriously dispelled. But the gloom which these calamities left on the minds of the people rendered them little disposed to commence new wars with a nation of their own blood for worthless territories.

The mere name of Affghanistan seems still synonymous with disaster. The series of misfortunes which followed each other in a sad and uninterrupted funereal procession can never be forgotten. They have obliterated the remembrance of the patriotic exultation which the storming of Ghuznee and the march to Cabul produced in 1839. Some of the men who then most loudly applauded the policy of Lord Auckland, afterwards, when the moment of disaster came, most reviled him and the Whig Government. They could not see that Lord Palmerston's foreign policy had nothing at all to do with the errors which had been committed, and from which the dreadful loss of the army of occupation proceeded. These errors were purely military; they had not the slightest connection with the original policy of the expedition; and to attribute the massacre in the Khoord Cabul Pass to Lord Palmerston is just as absurd as to

attribute the glory of the conquest of Scinde to Lord Aberdeen.

When politicians in England became convinced of the danger of Russian aggression, and of the necessity of employing means to oppose it, the natural consequence was that the alarm should also spread as far as the English empire in the East. The year 1836, which has been indicated as the commencement of this antagonism to Russia at Westminster may also be considered the time when it became plainly evident at Calcutta. The failure of the commercial mission to Cabul, the unmistakable evidence of the presence of Russian agents in Persia and Affghanistan, were enough to disquiet the minds of Indian statesmen. Soon even more substantial reasons for apprehension were afforded, and events occurred which required the serious consideration of those who were entrusted with the administration of British India. A Persian army advanced against Affghanistan, and on the 23d of November 1837, laid siege to Herat; and it seemed clear that Cabul and Candahar were also to be seized upon as the base of further operations. Those who knew not where Herat was, nor what was the importance of the position, both in a military and political point of view, might deride the fears of the In-

dian Government; but it was impossible for statesmen to look with indifference on the movements of Persia and Russia. The Emperor Nicholas evidently thought the war of much importance, and his agents urged the Shah of Persia to proceed, and promised him assistance in money and men. Nor was it merely on the frontier and in the far north-west that the opinion of the approaching downfal of the East India Company was prevalent. The natives of India were in a state of feverish excitement; there were in the earth and in the heavens presages of revolt and trouble; wild and anxious glances were cast on that threatening northern horizon; men spoke to each other of the storm that was gathering on the mountains; and it was openly prophesied in the greatest towns and the most remote villages of India, that the time was now coming when the English dominion would terminate. The Mahometan population prepared to welcome the Mahometan invaders; they confidently predicted that the white-faced infidels, who had so long lorded it over all true believers, would soon be driven into the sea. That exquisite political barometer, the public securities in India, rapidly fell, and pointed with its delicate index to the coming storm. Black indeed to all who looked upon them, seemed the clouds

that were bearing down upon the plains of India. An uneasy sense of an oppressive weight in the political atmosphere, was experienced at once by natives and English, from the highest to the lowest functionaries of the Company and the Crown.

The Government at home as well as the Government in India received the most positive and authentic intelligence that intrigues were going on, and that plots were thickening for the overthrow of the English empire in Hindostan. Lord Palmerston remonstrated strongly with the Court of St. Petersburg; Russia disavowed some of her agents; but still preparations were actively continued. The Governor-General and his advisers came to the resolution of meeting the danger half-way by placing a nominee of their own on the throne of Cabul, and of teaching the fierce tribes a useful lesson in their rocky wildernesses. If any thing could prove the apparent necessity of this resolution, it would be the fact that the instructions from England recommending this policy, and the despatches from India announcing to the Government at home that such was the decision of the Indian administration, crossed each other on the high seas.

No policy seemed ever more justified by

necessity than this invasion of Affghanistan. No policy can be more triumphantly justified on all the principles which regulate the intercourse of states and kingdoms. It was not undertaken for the mere selfish purpose of conquest, but was purely a defensive policy. Those who look upon the reasons for the expedition not from the local and detached view of Indian politics, but from a comprehensive survey of the general European system, will not find their vision distorted by that bloody exhalation which rises before the eyes of some authors while on this subject, and altogether perverts their judgment. It is much to be regretted that one gentleman who writes with much ability, who generally thinks correctly, and whose knowledge of Indian affairs is great and unquestionable, has so far been misled by this optical delusion as to speak of the misfortunes at Cabul as the just punishment of an "unholy and unrighteous policy;" to picture all the sufferers in the business as working under the influence of a curse; and to quote texts of Scripture in order to make the retribution appear more awful and impressive.* Curses and Scriptural texts are rhetorical figures

* Kaye's "History of the War in Affghanistan," throughout, and particularly vol. ii. p. 250. and 670.

from which writers on recent political events would do well to abstain. If it was unholy and unrighteous for the British to invade Affghanistan, it was unholy and unrighteous for them to be in India at all. And there is as little real piety or humanity, as there is wisdom or justice, in depicting our gallant countrymen in the passes of Affghanistan as under the awful shadow of a Divine vengeance, when they were slaughtered by the knives and jesails of their barbarous and treacherous foes.

On the 1st of October, 1838, the Governor-General issued his proclamation, in which it was announced that the British army would enter Affghanistan. Troops were soon on their march to the frontier.

A great army crossed the Indus. Candahar was speedily in the possession of the British troops. The strong fortress of Ghuznee was taken by storm in two hours. The victorious army entered Cabul in triumph, and successfully accomplished its mission. In the whole history of British India no campaign was ever more brilliantly executed than that of 1839, in Affghanistan. The residents in India were transported with joy; the press of England applauded; honours were showered on the leaders of the expedition. When Russia shortly

afterwards declared war against Khiva, and her armies advanced into districts so near to Affghanistan, where so many warlike chieftains were waiting impatiently for the promised support of the Czar, the march of the British army to Cabul was considered a master-stroke of policy. It was regarded as a bold challenge thrown by England, from those mountain fastnesses through which even Tamerlane was said to have bought his way, to all comers who should venture to dispute her ascendancy in Asia.

Until the 2nd of November, 1841, nothing had occurred to excite the serious apprehensions of the army at Cabul. But the English were wrapped in an apathetic state of unconsciousness of danger, and never awoke to the certainty of evil until their savage and cunning enemies were at their doors. In the midst of a disaffected and warlike population, far from their own frontier and from the reach of succour, the simplest military precautions were neglected. Rules of which every civilian can at once see the necessity, and which mere instinct would dictate to the rudest barbarians, were disregarded by the British officers. The army was separated from its supplies. The cantonments were surrounded by hills which offered the

greatest advantages to an assailant. No attempt had been made to strengthen the fortifications. Those dreadful defiles through which all communications with India must pass, were held at Cabul by fierce tribes whom the English Commander had never, until it was too late, thought of securing as friends, or guarding against as enemies. General Sale, on his way homewards, forced the Khoord Cabul Pass; but before he had reached Jellalabad, the misfortunes at Cabul had begun. Flames were unexpectedly seen issuing from a house in the city, inhabited by Sir Alexander Burnes. News reached the Commander-in-Chief that the unfortunate gentleman who, supposing the attack to be scarcely serious, would not permit his guard to fire on his enemies, had been murdered with his brother and another Englishman. Some troops were sent to suppress a riot; they found a rebellion. The cantonments were soon besieged; the commissariat, through the extraordinary negligence of having been placed in a spot far from the reach of the body of the army, was destroyed by the enemy; after a siege of some weeks provisions were exhausted, all resources were failing; and the soldiers, who had so long been reposing in indolent security, now found themselves in danger of dying by starvation, or of being forced to

surrender to their assailants, who were as ferocious and as untameable as the tigers and hyenas that howled and laughed amid the dark jungle and steep precipices of those dreadful passes which separated them from their countrymen.

Negotiations commenced. The same fatuity which had brought the unhappy Englishmen into their difficulties attended them to their mournful catastrophe; but the pity which is felt for their fate prevents their errors from being harshly condemned. It was agreed that all Affghanistan should be evacuated, that hostages should be given, and that provisions should be supplied to the troops on their homeward journey. On neither side was the engagement properly kept. The English envoy listened to private overtures which were only intended to ruin him; he, and those who accompanied him, were beguiled into an ambush; the lifeless trunk of Sir William Macnaghten was ignominiously exhibited in the bazaar of Cabul; and his companions to the place of conference were either murdered or carried into captivity.

Again negotiations were resumed; but harder terms were now proposed and accepted; the troops were to leave the greater portion of their artillery. A hard winter set in. The snow fell

in heavy flakes. The dispirited army at length began that fearful march which so few individuals were to survive. It is needless to multiply details. When the troops left Cabul their numbers were about 4,500 soldiers, and 12,000 camp followers; when they arrived at Jugdulluck, a distance of but thirty-five miles, out of the whole host only 300 people remained. One single person alone arrived at Jellalabad to tell the tale of horror. Even the few officers and soldiers who had not been massacred on the road were prisoners.

The insurrection extended to Jellalabad. Here it was met by a soldier of distinguished skill, courage, and resolution, who at all hazards determined to defend his position to the last, so that any of the miserable stragglers who should yet emerge from the defiles might have a place to rally round. And now for the first time since the commencement of these disasters, we seem to be reading of the exploits of British soldiers. General Sale's conduct at that awful moment was above all praise; he redeemed the military reputation of England in India; by his heroic defence of Jellalabad, which was the key of Eastern Affghanistan, the tide of war was once more turned, and rolled back upon the enemies of the British name.

The news soon reached Calcutta. Troops were slowly assembling, but with no definite object, when Lord Ellenborough arrived at the seat of government. The measures of the new Governor-General were, after some deliberation, vigorous and decisive. General Pollock marched from the Indus, fought his way through the Khybur Pass, and effected a junction with Sale and his brave comrades at Jellalabad. Some months were spent in recruiting the forces, and preparing for an advance. At length the army entered the formidable defiles, and completely routed their savage enemies wherever they ventured to offer any opposition. A great battle was fought; victory returned to the British ranks; and the English standard was proudly hoisted on the citadel of Cabul. In the meanwhile, General Nott, having held his own position at Candahar, wisely determined to join General Pollock at Cabul, that all resistance might be effectually put down. Thus the two armies, marching as on two sides of a triangle, met at the point where the first errors and misfortunes had originated, and our hold on Affghanistan seemed again secured.

But it had been resolved by the authorities in England and in India that these mountainous districts should be evacuated. The Governor-

General issued a proclamation, giving his reasons for that decision. The magnificent bazaar at Cabul was destroyed, and a considerable portion of the town reduced to ashes. Ghuznee, which had been lost, and again won in the course of the troubles, suffered the same fate. The armies marched homeward, leaving anarchy and confusion in their rear. Enraged to fury by the spectacle of the bones of their slaughtered countrymen bleaching in the winds, and scattered by the wild beasts which had fed upon their bodies, the troops committed many dreadful devastations as they passed by the scenes of the recent calamities.

It is possible to approve of the resolution which the Government took of abandoning Affghanistan in 1842, without joining in the loud clamour which was raised against the Government of 1838. That clamour was in every respect disgraceful to the fickle multitude who joined in it, and who were in haste to make amends for their former indiscriminate approbation by equally indiscriminate censure. The time, perhaps, has now come when these rash judgments of the moment may be corrected, and the events in Affghanistan impartially considered without going off into hysterics. Nothing is more unjust than to judge of the policy

of yesterday by the blind panic of to-day, and regardless of the great to-morrow. That sufficient for the day is the good or the evil of it, is no infallible maxim, even when applied to the contracted interests of an individual; it is the height of folly when applied to the expansive necessities of a great nation.

England has not yet done with Affghanistan. The time may not be far distant when our Indian army shall, under happier auspices, complete the work which was planned in 1838, apparently accomplished in 1839, and apparently abandoned in 1842. A war with Russia was once declared by English statesmen to be an improbability; it was barely admitted to be a possibility; it is now a fact. It is also a fact, that before the forces of the Autocrat met with those reverses on the Danube, and about the Caucasus, which have compelled him to confine his operations to a defence of his own territories, that a Russian army was on the point of marching for Cabul. There can be no doubt what its fate would have been; but there can be as little, that, had not so many adverse circumstances happened to Russia nearer home, the experiment would have been tried. The Emperor Nicholas has never meditated an attack on our Indian frontier by his own troops alone; he relied on his gold and

on the venality of the robber chieftains, who, when supported by a small body of regular troops, would be ready, for pay and plunder, to undertake anything. Other conquerors have before now descended on India through those passes. Surely it is not absurd to conclude that what has been done before may be attempted again.

On this question statistics are no infallible guide. Great conquerors have generally set the calculations of statistical tables at defiance. Men of science have not done enough to demonstrate the impossibility of an invasion of Hindostan from the north-west, when they show that the Russian commissariat is poor, and that thousands of soldiers must perish in the long march. Gold is as powerful as steel. At the exhibition of the yellow metal the wonderful metamorphosis of the old poet is every day accomplished; every day, at the sight of this talisman, from dragon's teeth spring up armed warriors. What happened on the Sutlej but three years after our evacuation of Affghanistan, ought at least to teach us how dangerous it is to allow warlike powers to exist and strengthen themselves on our frontiers. In a moment, 70,000 fighting men, with a formidable complement of artillery, and trained in the military science of Europe by French officers,

stood ready to contend against the British power, and the empire of Hindostan depended upon the result of one bloody and dubious day. The Governor-General at that time was fortunately himself a great soldier; but all his skill and prowess was put to the test before the enemy was completely overthrown. He threw himself into the thickest of the conflict, and fought under the Commander-in-Chief; because he knew how serious the danger was, and that to falter would be destruction. Yet there were at that time profound sages in India and England, proving to their own satisfaction and the satisfaction of most of their readers, that England had nothing to fear from any enemy beyond the Indus, and that all who recommended the necessity of timely precaution were foolish visionaries.

Even though the facts were as the opponents of Lord Auckland stated them, the conclusion drawn from them might still be questioned. It would be a miserable policy for a great empire to place its safety in deserts and mountains, and not on its own ability and readiness to resist all attacks. It is by her own courage and vigour that England has won and must keep India. What would be the conduct of a wise Governor-General should he have reason to believe that a

Russian and Persian invader was really approaching? He would not think of merely collecting his forces on the Indus, and there awaiting the advance of his assailants, with their wild auxiliaries from the mountains. As soon as he had received intelligence that a Russian army was advancing from the Caspian, and before it could effect a union with the troops of the Shah, and with all the predatory and warlike hordes that would be eager to join it, the Commander of the British forces would be ordered to march on Affghanistan, occupy Cabul, and siege Herat, which has been justly called "The Gate of India." Even those writers who have blamed the British Government for deciding on the invasion of Affghanistan when the Persian army, prompted by Russia, was besieging Herat, have been compelled to confess that it is on the possession of this very place, and the surrounding country, that the defence of India must depend.*

* Mr. Kaye, in his elaborate and excellent work on Affghanistan, sinks the character of the historian in that of the advocate, in order to make the policy of 1838 appear in all respects erroneous. Yet even he quotes the military report on the defences of Herat, and says, "It is only by the Herat route that a really formidable well-equipped army could make its way upon the Indian frontier from the regions on the north-west. Both the nature and the resources of the country are such as to favour the success of the in-

It would then be criminal neglect to allow an enemy to establish himself in such a position. At any cost the Herat route would have to be held by the English forces; and there, and not on the Indus, would the great battle have to be fought to decide who were to be the future masters of India. There the English general might laugh to scorn the efforts of every adversary. With all just precautions, such as were unfortunately neglected by Sir William Macnaghten and General Elphinstone, the British dominions in Hindostan would be unapproachable. Certain destruction would attend all assailants; and the Indian Empire would be invulnerable from all external enemies. The rapidity and brilliancy with which the humiliations of the army were re-

vader. All the materials necessary for the organisation of a great army, and the formation of his depôts, are to be found in the neighbourhood of Herat. The extraordinary fertility of the plain has fairly entitled it to be called the "Granary of Central Asia." Its mines supply lead, iron, and sulphur; the surface of the country, in almost every direction, is laden with saltpetre; the willow and poplar trees, which furnish the best charcoal, flourish in all parts of the country; whilst from the population might at any time be drawn hardy and docile soldiers to recruit the ranks of an invading army. Upon the possession of such a country would depend, in no small measure, the success of operations undertaken for the invasion or the defence of Hindostan." — Kaye's History of the War in Affghanistan, vol. i. p. 203.

deemed in 1842, showed indisputably that England could, had she pleased, have held Affghanistan. The withdrawal of the troops was a mere consideration of economy. The policy which Sir John M'Neil recommended, of converting the Affghans into a friendly nation, by strengthening their power, promoting a social compact amongst them, and thus erecting them into a barrier against all invaders from the north and west, has a very specious appearance. But it is in reality most insecure, and never could be long the means of peace and defence. We could not always depend on the continuance of the friendship of races habitually treacherous. The same strength and organisation we might establish in Affghanistan could be as easily turned against ourselves as against our enemies. In fact, with reason, or without reason, we should find ourselves compelled to guard against our own friends in Affghanistan. The value of this policy had really been tried. It was tried with the Sikhs. It was with the protection and friendship of England that the Maha-rajah Runjeet Sing became the ruler of a powerful state. He died; and his army was turned against us; our friends became our deadly enemies, whom we were obliged at last

to subdue. Is not the result of this experiment enough to show the impossibility of making eternal friends of warlike and barbarous races on our frontiers?

Lord Auckland went to India with the intention of peacefully administering the government of the Indian Empire, and of acquiring no new territories. He was essentially a man of peace. But he found, as all other governor-generals have found, that it was impossible to fix any permanent boundaries to the British dominions in Hindostan. Lord Ellenborough, like his predecessor and successors, sailed for India with the most peaceful intentions. But he could scarcely have issued from Simla the proclamation in which he announced the evacuation of Affghanistan, and his adoption of "a pacific and conservative policy;" he could scarcely have declared that the government of India was "content with the limits which nature appeared to have assigned to our Indian Empire," when he found himself obliged to resort to arms, and to undertake another conquest. Scinde was then subdued and added to our dominions; and beneficent Nature made no complaint, though the East Indian Directors did, but kindly accommodated herself to the circumstances which dictated the necessity of extending the frontier, and of vindicating our

authority. The time soon came when even Lord Ellenborough was accused of being too warlike; and one of the reasons of his recal was that he was projecting more wars. Lord Hardinge then undertook the government of India, firmly attached to a pacific policy; yet he had not been a year in office before another war began; and in his first proclamation on the subject he declared another extension of the frontier, and the country between the Beas and the left bank of the Sutlej was annexed to the English territories. And not only so. The termination of the war and the stringent conditions of peace imposed by the Governor-General, left the government of Lahore nominally independent, but really in a state of vassalage; and since then the whole of Runjeet Sing's empire has been incorporated with the British dominions. Our advance has been resistless and inevitable; the tide of British conquest is flowing onward and ever onward. It is as useless to command, like Canute, the billows on the sea shores to come no farther, as to stay the progress of England in Asia. The stern law by which we hold India neither permits us to retrograde nor to stand still. Wars are forced upon us, territories are annexed, and states are subjugated, by the very condition of our existence.

The great problem of empire remains for us to solve in Affghanistan. Either we must govern these fierce tribes, or they will end by helping our enemies to govern us. Either we must rule, or be ruled. Limits, which were once thought settled for our Indian Empire, have long been passed; races almost as wild as the Affghans have been tamed down and made obedient; from savage enemies they have been converted into brave Sepoys, who have faithfully followed the standard of England in bloody battle fields. Whatever may be said to the contrary, the rugged mountains of Affghanistan may one day become the citadels of our strength, and the impregnable bulwarks of our power. It is not, then, by the past, nor even by the present, but by the future, that the wisdom of this policy must be finally determined.

At a time when the outcry against the policy which produced the invasion of Affghanistan was loudest, when the newspapers were still full of harrowing details of the calamities which had fallen on the unfortunate troops at Cabul, when invectives against all who had, or were supposed to have had, any share in originating the expedition were delivered in Parliament and through the press, Lord Palmerston stood forward, and with admirable moral courage declared, that this

policy was sound, and that, with ordinary prudence, it would have been successful. He was answered with shouts of derision. For a time his voice was drowned in the storm of indignation which burst from the lips of honourable members. The tremendous ironical cheers which greeted the statesman as he proceeded, unawed by the rage he had provoked, to repeat his assertions, still ring in the ears of those who were present that night in the House of Commons. And when the great war that is now being waged shall have ended in great results; when not only Turkey, but Central Asia also, shall be saved from the power of Russia; when the "King of Kings" shall no longer remain under the delusion that his northern neighbour is his most powerful protector, and either British influence or British arms be omnipotent in Persia; when Englishmen shall travel securely through every pass in Affghanistan, the power of their nation be firmly established far beyond the Hindoo Koosh, and the Indus throughout the long course of its stream become one of the great highways for British commerce, these "derisive cheers" of short-sighted politicians ought to ring in the ears of posterity.

CHAP. X.

LORD ABERDEEN'S FOREIGN POLICY CONTINUED TO 1846. — THE KING OF THE FRENCH AND HIS CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. — AFFAIRS OF SPAIN AND GREECE. — COUNT NESSELRODE'S MEMORANDUM OF 1844. — OREGON QUESTION. — LORD ABERDEEN.

THE history of our foreign policy during the five years of Sir Robert Peel's government is peculiarly barren in great events, or in great political controversies. Europe was at peace, and seemed resolved to remain at peace. Monarchs and their advisers endeavoured, by their mutual compliments and assurances, to persuade themselves and each other that the revolutionary hurricane was over, and that courts and thrones were now secure. The history of France at this time is a history of fulsome compliments exchanged between the King of the French and his two representative Chambers. Louis Philippe assured the Deputies that they never before enjoyed such a good constitution, and the Deputies assured Louis Philippe that they never before had such a good king. Session after session these insincere decla-

rations were repeated, and both parties were painfully conscious of the falsehood they were acting and speaking. A collection of the addresses of the French Chambers to Louis Philippe during his eighteen years of royalty would form a curious volume. It would clearly illustrate the meaning of parliamentary government in France. It would abound in more foolish platitudes than were ever uttered by the republicans of the first revolution. The old republicans, with all their crimes, were at least in earnest; but what can be said for those men who were devotedly attached to the Orleans dynasty in the evening, and became furious haters of monarchy in all its forms the next morning? As the hour approached when the reign of the King of the French was to cease, and he was to fly from the soil of that beautiful France whose loyalty to himself, his children, and his grandchildren had been so frequently paraded, the outward devotion of the Deputies to their poor idol increased in vehemence and extravagance.

Louis Philippe wisely promoted the continuance of that English alliance which the treaty of the 15th of July, 1840, had so grievously endangered. He could not do otherwise; for where but in England could the monarch of the barricades hope to find sincere support? The King

of the French was wise in his generation; he could look for no friendship from Russia, Prussia, nor Austria; he could only trust in England. On this subject there has been much misconception. When Lord Palmerston was accused of ingratitude for deserting France, the nature of the connection between the two countries was not understood. No French politician has ever been able to deny that the support which England gave to the French constitutional monarchy in the first years of its existence was most valuable. Had it not been for England, there would have been in 1831, as in 1814, a general European combination against France: the monarchy of July was opposed, by the very fact of its being, to the legitimate monarchies of the Continent: in upholding it, as the British ministers did, the antagonism of Europe was broken, and they conferred a great favour without receiving any in return.

As time rolled on, and the King of the French thought himself more firmly seated on his throne, his obligations towards England were considered as an encumbrance. He was eager to show to the world that he could pursue an independent course of policy, and that he was not exclusively the ally of England. High and ambitious thoughts of founding a family now occupied his breast.

He became ashamed of his rank as the Citizen King, and wished to rival the old European monarchs. That intense desire for matrimonial alliances with the proud despotic families of the Continent, which, when it once establishes itself in the hearts of constitutional princes, is sure to make them traitors to their sacred trust, and lead them step by step to their ruin, was no stranger to his bosom. His first hopes were directed towards Spain, where, by Lord Palmerston's energy, there had been erected at least the semblance of a free monarchy. He secured a worthy accomplice in his schemes in the person of the Queen Mother. Long before the Eastern differences had arisen, Louis Philippe had taken a separate course in the peninsula, and had shown much mean jealousy of England. In 1836, the alliance between the two Governments was evidently becoming less and less cordial. The French Government positively refused to adopt the measures which the English statesman proposed for the complete and immediate pacification of Spain. In Greece a keen rivalry was springing up. In the small states partly dependent on the Western Powers, there were at last seen French and English parties violently opposed to each other. Lord Palmerston was not to blame for this state of things; it

could easily be shown that in every instance he was purely on the defensive, and that it was the French ministers who first separated themselves from him, and not he who first became their opponent. At last the aggressions of Mehemet Ali demonstrated to all Europe the disagreement of the two Governments. Here again France chalked out a course for herself, and the complaint plainly made by M. Thiers, and gently hinted by M. Guizot was, that Lord Palmerston did not give up his decided principles of policy for the sake of the friendship of France. There was something very unstatesmanlike in such a reproach. No country has a right to make its alliance the price of the abandonment of a course of policy which the minister of another country, when he supposed there was a perfect understanding between them, had conscientiously determined to follow. It would have been easy for Lord Palmerston to retort, that surely the friendship of England was worth more to France than the success of a usurper in Syria. The truth of the matter was, that the French Ministry were entirely dependent on the French Chambers, and that the representatives interfered so irregularly and so inconsiderately with the executive administration, that no steady policy could be carried

out in concert with England or with any other nation.

Lord Aberdeen had not been many months in office, when he witnessed a striking exemplification of the strange and unprecedented manner in which the foreign affairs of France were now conducted. In the December of 1841, a convention for a still more effective suppression of slavery was signed by all the five Powers. The French Chambers interposed by a note which condemned the right of search as it had been formally conceded, and M. Guizot could not but refuse the ratification of the new treaty. The strongest argument used by the ardent deputies against this convention was, that it had been drawn up by Lord Palmerston, who had also signed the convention of the 15th of July, 1840. The English alliance was not now popular in France, and M. Guizot endured much obloquy for still adhering to this policy. Not satisfied with frustrating the convention of 1841, the French Chambers regretted the concessions of 1831 and 1833. They inserted a paragraph in their reply to the Address from the throne, hoping that the Ministers would press negotiations for bringing the commerce of France exclusively under the surveillance of the national flag. The treaty of Washington, by which they supposed

that Lord Aberdeen had formally surrendered to America the right which was enforced against France, made them still more desirous of abrogating the earlier treaties. With the annual resolution in favour of the nationality of Poland, they now began annually to pass their resolution in favour of the national flag of France. To those who are accustomed to the systematic working of the English Legislature, in which questions of foreign policy are invariably considered questions of confidence, this frequent interference of the French Chambers with the business of the administration, appears most unparliamentary. An English Ministry which should once be reminded of its duty by a vote of the House of Commons, would immediately retire. But representative government in France was of another kind; and Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen made every allowance for the difficult circumstances in which M. Guizot was placed, and did all they fairly could to keep him in office. They felt that, although this statesman had many faults, and although his conduct in the last two years of his ministerial life proved him to be by no means worthy of that unlimited confidence and regard which he at this time received from England, yet he was more to be trusted than his political rival, M. Thiers, who had obviously no decided

principles, and was the mere mouthpiece of the French journalists.

While this good understanding continued, and was every day more necessary for both Governments, they moved harmoniously together, and their energy, instead of being spent in neutralising the action of each other, was beneficially exerted for promoting good government in countries to which their influence extended. In 1843, Greece and Spain, which might be considered both as the creations and the victims of France and England, were disturbed by rebellions that assumed the form of revolutions. The Regent, the Duke of Victory, was driven from power, and was obliged to seek an asylum in England. He was received here with the respect which was due to his character, and the sympathy which one who had been a true friend to our Government had a right to expect. The French press had long reproached our ministers for supporting Espartero; but it will scarcely now be denied that in supporting him Lord Palmerston and Lord Aberdeen supported the best interests of Spain. Nevertheless, the King of the French and the Queen-mother, Maria Christina, rejoiced at his fall; they thought now that the game was in their own hands; and these two devoted champions of liberty and morality secretly exchanged

many hearty congratulations. They did not foresee that the fall of Espartero, who opposed their vile schemes, was an evil omen to themselves and to their race.

The bloodless revolution effected in Greece was in all respects harmless. King Otho was simply reminded of the constitution which had been promised to his subjects in 1833, and to which the modern Athenians had a most unquestionable right; he was also told that "it would be expedient" for him not to confine his friendship to his Bavarian countrymen who had followed him to Greece, and who, supported by the Russian ambassador, monopolised the honours of the new kingdom. Both Lord Palmerston and Lord Aberdeen have been much blamed for not insisting on the Greek constitution being carried earlier into effect. But the event showed whose fault it was that King Otho had not fulfilled his engagements. All monarchs who are honoured with the friendship of the Russian Autocrat, become singularly oblivious of their constitutional promises. As soon as the revolution had been accomplished, and his Greek Majesty had promised to comply with the wishes of his subjects, a vessel of war came to the Piræus by the peremptory order of Nicholas, and conveyed the Russian ambassador from the classic shores.

Constitutional Greece thus lost the countenance of the Emperor of Russia, but the conduct of the King of Prussia in the same year was quite to his taste. The States of Posen also reminded Frederic William of the assurances they had received, and the institutions they had been promised in May 1815. The reply of the King of Prussia may stand for a model of despotic dignity and royal reasoning. The address, he said, was highly irregular. He "entirely disapproved of its sentiments and proposals." He would enter into no explanations relating to the "indecorous allusion to the royal decree of May 1815, snch decree being not obligatory upon us."

In the same spirit "the sovereign princes and free towns of Germany" sent, in the spring of 1844, their plenipotentiaries to Vienna, and after having been harangued by Prince Metternich, passed resolutions against all evil-disposed persons who could think of dividing the regal power, or of appealing to the articles of the Treaty of Vienna. Both the general and separate treaties of that Congress, it was plainly declared, were to be interpreted by governments in the manner which might appear to them most expedient. What would be said of individuals who should announce to the world that they had determined to construe their written obligations

in any form which might most suit their convenience? Have governments no shame? If Prince Metternich had been that enlightened and profound statesman which one of his admirers in England has declared him to be, he would have seen that there were clouds in the Eastern horizon ominous of the time when Austria must either adopt a moderate, constitutional policy, or consent to be for ever at the feet of Russia. In 1843, negotiations had been going on relating to the disputes between Russia and Turkey, on the insurrection in Servia; by the deposition of one prince and the election of another, Russia arrogantly affirmed that Turkey had violated her treaties; and the Emperor demanded the expulsion of the new ruler, and the dismissal of his agents. Austria, in her eagerness to trample on the liberties of her own people, was gradually abandoning her old traditional policy. She asserted that this dispute was not of European interest, that it might be left to be settled by Russia and Turkey alone, that it was not of so much importance as to require the interposition of the great Powers. Lord Aberdeen thought that since Prince Metternich did not see the necessity for interference, it would be useless for the Western Powers to complicate relations, when there was no general concurrence on the

means to be employed. He has been lately much attacked for not seizing the occasion, and acting with more decision against Russia. But this was scarcely a direct attack on Turkey; and the Emperor Nicholas had then no intention of pushing matters to an extremity. Austria was particularly interested in the state of Servia, and yet Austria remained passive. Lord Palmerston, however, censured the government for the indifference which was displayed; and Russia has certainly proved that any forbearance shown to her is likely to be misunderstood.

When M. Guizot was assailed in the Chamber of Deputies for not rendering more efficient aid to Turkey on this Servian dispute, he defended himself as the English Ministers did, by pointing to the apathy of the Austrian Government. He said that he could not do otherwise than follow the example of Austria and England. But the Western Powers were not entirely quiescent; without assuming a hostile attitude, they exerted their diplomacy in favour of Turkey.

An incident occurred on an island of the Pacific, which for a moment threatened to compromise the friendship of the French and English Governments. Great importance was attached to it at the time; but now it is only worth recalling as affording a conclusive proof that while

Lord Aberdeen was Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the Government was not influenced by that preposterous love of peace at any price with which this minister had been reproached. The policy of Sir Robert Peel's administration was essentially and avowedly pacific; for the sake of peace they even made some sacrifices; but to these sacrifices there was a limit. The Ministers were engaged in carrying out a great commercial experiment; by their domestic policy they were diffusing content and happiness throughout the land, and conferring an inestimable boon on many future generations. Since it is certain that Free Trade would not have been established in a time of war, it is most inconsistent in those who approve of that commercial policy to blame their ministers for being anxious to avoid all causes of quarrel, and to conduct all affairs with other nations in the spirit of peace. When, however, a wrong was inflicted by a French admiral on a British subject, a missionary, who had performed the duties of a consul at Tahiti, redress was promptly demanded by Lord Aberdeen, and Sir Robert Peel spoke some strong and unmistakable words in the House of Commons: "A gross outrage, accompanied by a gross indignity, has been committed," said the Prime Minister; and the indemnity required

from the French Government was immediately promised and speedily given.

But the affairs of Otaheite had been the subject of many discussions in the French and English Parliaments, before the news of the insult offered to Mr. Pritchard reached London. The Emperor Nicholas had watched the events in the Pacific. Not even to the English Opposition was the calmness and moderation of Lord Aberdeen more displeasing than to his Imperial Majesty. He fondly hoped either that the French Chambers would compel M. Guizot to support the imprudent measures of Admiral Dupetit Thouars, or that Lord Aberdeen would be obliged by public opinion in England to demand concessions from the French Government which it could not honourably grant. In both desires he was disappointed. The liberal party in France inveighed against M. Guizot, and many politicians in England declaimed against Lord Aberdeen; but to retain the friendship of France without losing the confidence of Russia was surely no contemptible diplomatic achievement, and this fact indicates more than volumes could express, the wisdom and dignity of Lord Aberdeen's policy in 1844.

Yet this was the time when that engagement between the English Government and the Russian

Emperor was entered into, which has been so much misunderstood, and so eagerly misrepresented. It was in the June of this year that Nicholas visited England. It was on conversations held with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen during the brief sojourn of the Czar in this country, that the celebrated Memorandum of Count Nesselrode was based. This document has lately been presented to Parliament by the command of Her Majesty; it has been referred to by the official journal of St. Petersburg in justification of the recent attack on Turkey; and the English Opposition, echoing in this respect the tone of the Czar's organ, have spoken of it as a secret Memorandum stipulating for the partition of the Ottoman Empire. In justice to the English minister it requires some consideration.

The first thought that must strike an impartial person on attentively reading the document on which so much stress has been laid, is that it has an extremely innocent appearance. There may be evil in it, but it certainly does not show itself at the first glance. It would seem to be one of the most harmless, one of the most pacific, and one of the best intentioned of state papers. Beginning with the declaration that Russia and England are mutually convinced of the necessity of maintaining the Ottoman Porte

in its independence and territorial possessions, as the best combination for the general interests of Europe, the Memorandum proceeds to affirm that Russia and England have therefore an equal interest in uniting to strengthen that empire, and to shield it from all dangers; that it is absolutely necessary the Porte should be left in peace, and not be disturbed by diplomatic bickerings, or by uncalled-for interference in its internal affairs; that as the Porte, counting on the jealousies among the states of Europe, has a constant tendency to escape from its engagements, it should not be confirmed in this delusion, but that all the great Powers should make common cause in seeing justice done to each other. That another complaint is the difficulty of reconciling the Sultan's sovereignty with the interests of the Christian population; that the Ottoman ministers should be impressed with the importance of treating the Christians with mildness; but that the representatives of the great Powers, while insisting on this truth, ought scrupulously to guard against any exclusive dictation, and exert all their influence to keep the Christians in obedience to the Sultan. That if this course be followed with moderation and calmness, it is likely to be successful, and all complications affecting the tranquillity of the Ottoman Empire may be avoided. That still it

is not to be concealed that this empire holds within itself many elements of dissolution; and that unforeseen circumstances may hasten its fall, in spite of all the efforts of friendly cabinets to preserve it. That it is not given to human foresight to settle beforehand a plan of action for an unknown case; but in the uncertainty impending over the future, one fundamental idea may admit of application: if Russia and England, in the event of such a catastrophe, shall have come to a previous understanding as to a common course of action, the danger will be much diminished; and the more so because that understanding will have the full assent of Austria, between whom and Russia there was an entire conformity of principle. That the reason of this was very simple; by land Russia exerted over Turkey a preponderant action; by sea England held the same position; isolated action of these two Powers might do much mischief; united, it must produce a positive benefit. That this principle was agreed upon during the Emperor's last residence in London; and the result was the eventual engagements that if anything unforeseen should occur in Turkey, England and Russia would consult together on the measures they might take in common. That the object of the understanding was to uphold the Ottoman

Empire in its present state as long as it could be upheld; but if it should crumble to pieces, to enter into a previous concert on all matters relating to the establishment of a new order of things, and together to take care that the changes which must occur might not be detrimental to the rights and security of the two states, and to the balance of power. That as the policy of Austria is perfectly identified with that of Russia, if England were to act in concert with them, France must be obliged to follow in the course decided upon at St. Petersburg, London, and Vienna; and a conflict between the great Powers be obviated, and peace maintained even in such serious circumstances.

This is the Memorandum of June 1844, free as much as possible from mere diplomatic formalities, and expressed in as plain English as the tortuous and uncouth phraseology of Count Nesselrode will allow. At best, however, some of the sentences are sufficiently vague, and opposed to the idioms of our language. For the sake of truth and fairness it is well that it should be given entire, that every one may judge for himself whether the accusations founded upon it are just. Did Lord Aberdeen in admitting the correctness of this Memorandum agree

to the partition of the Ottoman Empire? Does he stand confessed a traitor to the best interests of England, and in connivance for the worst of purposes with the Emperor of Russia? These heavy charges have been publicly made by the Leader of Opposition in the House of Commons; and he seemed quite unconscious of the position in which he placed both Lord Aberdeen and himself by giving them utterance. He made the accusation that Lord Aberdeen, in the highest post to which a British subject can aspire, was a deliberate traitor, and therefore guilty of the greatest crimes. Never in our parliamentary history was such a charge made by a leader of a party against the head of a government. It is not that Lord Aberdeen was a weak or a mistaken minister; but that in his long political career he had committed, and was then habitually committing, high treason. He who made such assertions was bound, even though he stood alone in his opinion, to bring forward a motion of impeachment, or admit himself to be a calumniator. No member of parliament, much less the leader of a great party, has a right to bandy such accusations about, and then shrink from bringing them to a definite issue. This is not political warfare. It is not a question of public principle, but of private honour.

No individual, whether he be a member of parliament or a simple citizen, can declare his neighbour to be guilty of larceny or forgery, without being compelled to substantiate his assertions before a legal tribunal, or to make ample compensation to the object of his defamation. Is the moral responsibility of the public man who accuses a prime minister, not of inconsistency, not of want of judgment, not of laxness of principle, but of downright treachery, less than the legal responsibility of the citizen? What is the magnitude of the crimes committed by the humble prisoners in our police courts and halls of justice, compared with that of the prime minister who betrays his sovereign and his country? The member who, in his place in Parliament, even hints his suspicions of such base conduct, ought at once, whatever may be the party conveniences of the hour, to make his accusations good, or ever afterwards remain silent. The same charges which the leader of Opposition has brought against Lord Aberdeen, Mr. Urquhart brought against Lord Palmerston. But of Mr. Urquhart this may at least be said, that as soon as he had obtained a seat in Parliament, he did make a motion for papers avowedly for the purpose of framing articles of impeachment. So much cannot be said for the Leader of Opposition, though

he was in a position of much greater responsibility, and ought surely to have had very strong evidence, amounting to much more than a moral conviction, before such charges ever passed his lips. When challenged by Mr. Gladstone to bring forward a vote of want of confidence, as, after what he had said, it was his especial duty to do, he only thought of replying by a quibble that he would move a vote of want of confidence in the Ministers as soon as they proved that they had any confidence in themselves. And this in a time of war! What would be said of the mariner who, when his vessel was among the breakers, should declare that he would not remove a treacherous pilot from the helm, because some of the crew were as much convinced as himself of the evil intentions of the man to whom the safety of the ship and the lives of all on board were entrusted?

The Emperor of Russia had, doubtless, an object in coming to the understanding he did with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen. He doubtless thought that he had gained an important point in securing their adhesion to the plan of action which was then defined. To appreciate this document, like others emanating from the same source, it ought to be read backwards. Beginning with the last sentences instead of the

first, the design of the Memorandum is at once seen. It is contained in the few words, "If England, as the principal Maritime Power, acts in concert with Russia and Austria, it is to be supposed that France will find herself obliged to act in conformity with the course agreed upon between St. Petersburg, London, and Vienna." This is the key to the awful paper which has been said to be so diabolical in its object. The reason why the Czar was so anxious that England should pledge herself not to act without consulting Russia in any Eastern conjuncture, was simply because he feared that the Western Powers might, some day, act without his consent or knowledge, and that Russia might be left in that same state of isolation in which France had been placed through the perverseness of M. Thiers in 1840. The events of that year had made a deep impression on the mind of the Emperor. The alliance of France and England, which seemed, notwithstanding any occasional differences, to become more natural and more systematic every day, was to him a constant cause of apprehension. He did not doubt that the two nations could effectually prevent his influence from being predominant in Turkey, and paralyse, even in the moment of action, the movement of his fleets and armies. The vigour and rapidity with which England

had at last decided the fate of the Pasha of Egypt, whose power had long appeared so menacing, inspired even the proud Autocrat with some fears for his own future; and he dreaded that, should the forces of France and England be once combined, and skilfully directed against himself, his destiny might not be very different from that of Mehemet Ali.

In his northern capital he eagerly lent his ear to his dependents, who assured him that after the humiliation France had suffered at the hands of England in 1840, the two countries could never again be sincere allies. Lord Aberdeen had not, however, been long in office, when, to the alarm of Nicholas, he made use of the words "*entente cordiale*," as expressive of the relations of the two Governments. Nor was this a mere diplomatic phrase; it was an undeniable fact, of which the political events of the last three years had afforded abundant evidence. This understanding had for its principle a just respect for the rights of all nations, and originated in the esteem and confidence with which M. Guizot and Lord Aberdeen were mutually inspired. The influence which the English minister thus acquired in French councils could be the cause of no jealousy to other states; for it was exercised for the general welfare of Europe, and was

cordially approved by Prussia and Austria. It depended upon no treaty. In it there was nothing exclusive. The friendship of these two eminent statesmen gave it all its life and vigour. Yet all this time the French press was inveighing against the ambition of Russia, and inculcating the duty of opposing all the attempts of the Czar to establish his dominion in Turkey. Pacific as was the policy of M. Guizot, it could not be concealed from Nicholas that the French Government was even then proceeding in its career of conquest in Africa, and that the French fleet, under the command of the Prince de Joinville, was performing some very brilliant actions. The jealousy of England had not been roused, even by the bombardment of Mogador. An English squadron watched these operations in the Mediterranean; but the English Ministry showed not the least intention of making the war a cause of quarrel between the two nations. It was evident that the French people looked to the conquest of Algiers as the basis of still greater operations. It was evident that the state of the Ottoman Empire and the policy of Russia in the East had something to do with the determination of France to maintain her hold, at all hazards, on Algiers. The Emperor of Russia also knew that the government of the King of the French, obeying

the impulse of the nation, was ready, had not Austria and England held back, to have made even the Servian quarrel a case for intervention. There could be no doubt that if England should unite with her, France would be prepared at any time to oppose Russia in the East. How was this danger to be prevented? How was it possible to hinder the Western Powers from coming to some secret arrangement to rescue Turkey?

One course, and only one course, was open. Without England, France could do nothing. Unsupported by England, the naval power of France was scarcely equal to that of Russia. Alone, it was evident that France never could make the Eastern difficulty a cause of war, and that Russia, both by land and sea, would be more than a match for all the forces which France might bring, either into the Baltic or the Euxine. It was therefore necessary to make any pledge to England, in order to bind her in return not to take any decisive resolution on the affairs of Turkey, without consulting Russia. With this object, the Emperor Nicholas arrived in London, professed his anxiety to maintain the Ottoman Empire, relinquished all exclusive views of aggrandisement, promised to abstain from any interference in Turkey, and to take no steps in

the East without previously asking the opinion of the English Government.

Did Lord Aberdeen act rightly in consenting to such engagement? This question may unhesitatingly be answered in the affirmative; and it may also be confidently added, that any other minister would have agreed to the same terms. Had Lord Palmerston been in the Foreign Office at the time, he would have acted in the same manner. As in 1841 he thought it much to gain the assent of Russia to the convention by which her exclusive pretensions to Turkey were given up, so in 1844 he would have considered that an engagement by which the Emperor of Russia agreed to do nothing in the East without first communicating his intentions to the English Ministers, declared that the integrity and the independence of the Porte should be respected, not only renounced for himself, but for all the princes of Europe, any right, as Christian rulers, to dictate to the Porte for the advantage of its Christian subjects, and promised not to harass the Sultan by diplomatic bickerings and perpetual interference, was in the same spirit as the recent treaty, and provided for the tranquillity of the Ottoman Empire.

The only sentence in the Memorandum to which any objection can be made, is that in

which it is stated that France would be compelled to adopt the same measures as the other Powers of Europe. But it is right to remember that this passage was not written by Lord Aberdeen, but by Count Nesselrode; and that though it was plainly the intention of the Russian minister to continue the isolation of France in her Eastern policy, yet the English Government was on the best of terms with that of France, and was not by this agreement obliged to consent to anything of which France might disapprove. Under any circumstances it was extremely unlikely that England would come to any final decision on the affairs of Turkey without endeavouring to obtain the concurrence of France in the same resolutions; and as the tenor of the Memorandum was immediately communicated to M. Guizot, and as the relations between the two Governments increased rather than diminished in cordiality, it is obvious that this document was understood to mean, what Lord Aberdeen believed it to be, a positive engagement on the part of Russia, all the more stringent because it was not in the form of a treaty, never to encroach on the power of the Sultan, nor to do anything affecting Turkey without the knowledge of England.

By what process of reasoning the Emperor of Russia should have lately indicated this Memo-

randum of Nesselrode as a justification of his conduct, and as a proof of Lord Aberdeen's participation in his schemes, it is impossible to conceive. The paper declares, on the word of a sovereign, his desire for the maintenance of the Ottoman Empire; the Emperor Nicholas avowedly has attempted to overthrow the power of the Sultan, and his quarrel with England arose simply from the fact of her believing that Turkey had still a strong principle of life within her. The paper stipulates that no Power, nor all the Powers together, should interfere with the sovereign rights of the Sultan; the Emperor Nicholas declared war against the Porte, because it would not consent to hand over to himself the allegiance of all the Greek Christians in Turkey. The paper stipulates that Russia should do nothing in Turkey without the knowledge of England; the Emperor Nicholas not only neglected to inform the English Ministers of what his real intentions were, but gave them assurances which were directly contradicted by facts, and spoke of nothing but peace to our ambassador, while the conduct of his agent in Turkey, and his acts on the frontier, breathed nothing but war. The Memorandum, instead of proving Lord Aberdeen's complicity, only proves the Czar's own want of honour and good faith ; just

as the protocol of 1826 spoke of peace, when Russia only intended war, so the Autocrat construed his engagement to support the integrity of Turkey, to mean the partition of the Ottoman Empire. And there are politicians in England, who, judging of others by themselves, and adopting the Czar's notions of morality and honour, while professedly opposing his policy, are ready to join in the same interpretations of treaties and state documents.

On the morning of the 6th of October, three months after the visit of the Emperor of Russia, the King of the French landed at Portsmouth, and was most enthusiastically received by the government and the nation. The arrival of Louis Philippe in England was regarded as a pledge of future peace; and the harmony of the two kingdoms was not at any time interrupted. They might take different views of the state of affairs in Spain and Greece, but there was no open antagonism such as there had been some years earlier, and was again to be some months later. At length another convention for the suppression of the slave trade was agreed upon, and the irritability of the French nation was soothed by the concessions which Lord Aberdeen made to their flag.

Even in America, France and England main-

tained a common action, and, much to the indignation of some American politicians, ventured to question the pretensions they put forth to decide all disputes according to their interests, and without regard to the opinions of those European governments, which, having territories on the American continent, had a right to an opinion even on questions of transatlantic policy. The assertion of the doctrine of Mr. Munroe may one day involve the United States in a war with the whole of Europe. The inaugural address of Mr. President Polk has the same tenor as certain declarations made by the Emperor Nicholas of Russia. The great Republic of America and the great despotism of Northern Europe have many points of resemblance. Some American rulers have made similar pretensions, and had not wiser counsels prevailed in 1846, and had not a statesman of so much moderation as Lord Aberdeen been in the Foreign Office of England, the aspiring republicans might have suffered the same fate as that which is impending over the proud Autocrat.

As soon as the ratifications of the treaty of Washington were exchanged, Mr. Fox, the representative of England, informed the American Government that, by the command of Lord Aberdeen, he was ready to commence negotiations for

settling the boundary to the west of the Rocky Mountains. This question had long been a subject of controversy. In 1818, 1822, and 1826, Lord Castlereagh and Mr. Canning had both endeavoured to decide the claims of their governments to the territories of Oregon: a temporary arrangement had been made in 1818, and in 1827 was continued for an indefinite period; but the respective rights of England and the United States to Oregon still remained undetermined. Lord Aberdeen did wisely in attempting a final settlement of the dispute. To leave such questions open for so many years, and to suffer them to recur from time to time in a more formidable form, was a policy not creditable to statesmen. Years, however, slipped away from the time when Lord Aberdeen's despatch to Mr. Fox was sent across the Atlantic; one President of the United States succeeded another, and negotiation followed negotiation, but the difficulty still remained, and became greater than ever.

To enter into any detail of the arguments on either side would now be useless. The neighbouring regions were not then of so much value as they have become since the discovery of gold in California. The navigation of the river Columbia, Vancouver's Island, and the harbours on the shores of the Pacific, might seem of import-

ance to the future of a great nation; but all the natural, commercial, and political advantages of the whole Oregon territory would have been dearly purchased by a war between the North American republic and Great Britain. It must have checked the developement of the United States for half a century.

But there were no apprehensions of war while the negotiations were going on between Mr. Pakenham and Mr. Calhoun. Lord Aberdeen's proposals were declined, his offer of arbitration was also rejected. Still, though the English minister thought the rights of his government incontestable, and though the American minister considered the claims of the United States equally unquestionable, no angry feeling had yet been engendered in the course of the discussion. It was only on the delivery of Mr. President Polk's inaugural address that the business became serious. The new President, in this political effusion, after alluding to his youth and inexpeerince, fervently invoked "the aid of Almighty Providence" to guard the country from the mischiefs which might proceed from "an unwise policy": and the first year of Mr. Polk's administration showed that there was only too much reason for such an invocation. He told his fellow-citizens that their title to the whole territory of

Oregon was "clear and unquestionable," and that he considered it his duty to uphold their right. This address was delivered on the 3rd of March, 1845, and before the end of the month was perused with astonishment in England. The President's words were justly regarded as threatening; and politicians of all parties expressed their determination not to submit to such unbecoming language. Lord Aberdeen, in the House of Lords, said in answer to Lord Clarendon, amid cheers from all sides of the House: "With the most anxious desire for peace, I still trust that this question may be amicably settled; but if not, we possess rights 'clear and unquestionable,' which, by the blessing of God, and the support of Parliament, the Government is prepared to maintain."

This is not the declaration of a minister ready to accept peace at any price, as Lord Aberdeen has sometimes been represented. Lord Palmerston never took up a more decided position, than Lord Aberdeen, on both the subjects of Tahiti and of Oregon, in these five years of office, deliberately assumed.

As an illustration of the spirit in which Foreign Affairs were conducted, this Oregon question possesses much interest; but in other respects it is now of little importance. The honour of the

settlement belongs exclusively to Lord Aberdeen. The suggestion of the compromise was his last great act as Foreign Secretary. It was while the administration of Sir Robert Peel held office until Lord John Russell had formed his cabinet, that the news of the acceptance of the proposals by the American Government reached England. These northern boundaries were now settled, and every difficulty from this cause removed. Thus, what had so long perplexed Lord Castlereagh, Mr. Canning, and even Lord Palmerston, was now happily concluded; and it may be doubted whether any statesman but Lord Aberdeen could, after so much bad feeling had arisen, have preserved peace between the two nations, so jealous of each other, and yet so eternally associated, without sacrificing the honour or the interest of either. It was a worthy conclusion of his career as Foreign Minister; a career which, if it be not distinguished by great combinations, energetic action, or unrivalled brilliancy, if it be not of the kind which charms the imagination, dazzles the eye, or leads the understanding captive, has much in it that deserves the approbation of his countrymen, as standing for the model of a quiet, dignified, and pacific policy, offending no national prejudices, engendering no fierce heart-burnings, making no inveterate

enemies; but conciliating allies, maintaining a steady neutrality amid the angry contentions of an age, divided as no other age was ever divided, between mad rulers and mad subjects, and being at once just and friendly to the humblest as well as to the greatest states of the world.

To be popular with the politicans of taverns and vestries has never been the ambition of this statesman. He has disdained to flatter the national pride; he has never ministered to the vanity at the expense of the interests of Englishmen. A less apathetic temperament, with greater sympathy for the suffering multitudes of Europe, and a more apparent hatred of oppression, such as the noblest and wisest of Liberal Conservative statesmen, Edmund Burke, possessed, may sometimes seem desirable in the ideal portrait of an English minister. But Lord Aberdeen must be taken as he is. He has the proud consciousness of never having expressed a sentiment he did not feel, and of never having stooped to buy popularity at the price of his self-respect. His name will be remembered with gratitude by the people when many popular favourites and all his malignant enemies shall be forgotten. It will be well for England if she never shall have a Foreign Secretary less sincere and upright than Lord Aberdeen.

CHAP. XI.

INTRIGUE. — LORD PALMERSTON AGAIN FOREIGN MINISTER. — SPANISH MARRIAGES. — IDENTITY OF THE POLICIES OF LORD ABERDEEN AND LORD PALMERSTON ON THIS QUESTION. — M. GUIZOT. — ANNEXATION OF CRACOW. — DISCUSSION IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. — CONCURRENCE OF OPINION. — AN APOLOGIST FOR THE PARTITION OF POLAND. — PORTUGAL AND SWITZERLAND. — POLITICAL MOVEMENTS IN ITALY. — MISSION OF LORD MINTO. — CLOSE OF 1847.

When Sir Robert Peel's Government resigned in the December of 1845, and Lord John Russell attempted to construct a Whig Cabinet, the question of the Corn Laws was not, as the public soon learnt, the only difficulty which the new Prime Minister had to meet. It appeared that there was at least one hereditary Whig statesman who could not appreciate the value of Lord Palmerston's claims to be once more Foreign Secretary, and who set about resisting his pretensions. The son of the great prime minister of the great Reform Cabinet could not of course suppose that he would ever be excluded from a Liberal Ministry. It seemed impossible to do without

Lord Grey; but very easy to do without Lord Palmerston. This singular delusion was persisted in, and Lord John Russell found himself obliged to relinquish the task which he had conscientiously undertaken.

This failure, had it not been for the intrigue against one who had shown so much ability both in office and in opposition, and whose only crimes were his success and his patriotism, was not much to be regretted. It was better that Sir Robert Peel should again return to office and complete the work he had begun. But the effect of Lord Grey's opposition to Lord Palmerston's resumption of the duties of Foreign Minister did not end with the political abortion of December 1845. It was known abroad that it was on account of Lord Palmerston's sentiments and conduct with regard to France that one of the noblemen of the Whig party had thus questioned the propriety of the appointment. The King of the French and his ministers could not but agree with Lord Grey; thus when Lord Palmerston did again become Foreign Minister, some months later, notwithstanding that he had in the interval visited Paris, and done all he could to remove this unfavourable impression from the minds of the rulers of France, he found, from no fault of his own, his relations with that Government seri-

ously complicated. Experience alone could teach some great Whig politicians the value and the importance of the statesman who honoured them by adhering to their party, and throwing the weight of his ability and popularity into their political scale. They did not know that the people of England, when forming their judgment on foreign policy, are not partisans; that all they require is patriotism, courage, and sagacity; and that they will always stand by the minister who will stand by the country.

When Lord Palmerston retired from office in 1841, France and England were vigorously engaged in thwarting each other in Spain. England indeed had no other object than the success of that constitutional system which she had so powerfully contributed to establish; and our minister therefore only supported that Spanish political party which he considered best able and most willing to carry out the principles of good government. The soundness of Lord Palmerston's views have been justified by time and experience. No person who knows anything of the Peninsula will now deny that the Progresista party is by far the purest and the most honest of the sections into which the Spanish nation is divided. The Moderados, who enjoyed the patronage of France, were in fact the mere

instruments of the Queen Mother, Maria Christina; she was really the head of this faction, and by such a leader the followers may be judged. There were doubtless some men amongst them of virtue and talent; but for the most part they were a mere cabal of greedy, corrupt, and unprincipled politicians. As such they were the fittest for carrying out the schemes for the aggrandisement of his family, which, the longer the King of the French remained on the throne, he with miserly prudence the more restlessly pursued. While Espartero remained in power, the fear that England might carry off the prize he thought so captivating, and marry the young Queen of Spain and the Infanta to princes of her own choosing, rendered Louis Philippe anxious to consent to a compromise. At first M. Guizot assured Lord Aberdeen of the willingness of the French Government to co-operate with England to effect the two marriages. But one reservation was included in the offers which France made. So early as in 1842 she informed the Governments interested in this question, that she would not consent to any prince but one of the House of Bourbon marrying the Queen of Spain.

This was a somewhat extraordinary position for a constitutional government, such as that

of the King of the French, to take on a question relating to an independent kingdom. It was a revival of the doctrine of legitimacy, and a revival of the pretensions of the French Bourbons to control the affairs of Spain. To this principle, as an abstract proposition, no English minister could consent. The French Government, to be sure, professed great respect for the independence of Spain, and for the free choice of the young Queen. But M. Guizot thought that they might be reconciled to such a limitation. What would be said in private life of the father of a large family, who should declare his great consideration for the personal independence of a young heiress, and yet insist on her marrying one of his family? It was never asserted, when the declaration was made, that the Queen of Spain had any peculiar predilection for the descendants of Philip the Fifth; and such a condition as that proposed by King Louis Philippe was absolutely unwarrantable. Yet as a fact indicative of the spirit in which these negotiations were conducted by the French Government, this imperious announcement deserves attention. It shows the different relations in which France and England stood, and accounts for much that subsequently occurred.

England did not in any manner attempt to influence the choice of the Spanish Court. Yet, surely, if any Government had an excuse for interfering with the marriage of the Queen of Spain, it was that of England; for had it not been for England, the Queen of Spain might never have worn the diadem. Lord Palmerston had exposed himself to much obloquy, and even put to hazard his own position in the English Cabinet, for the purpose of supporting the constitutional cause in Spain. When France hung back, he still persevered. What right, then, had France, which England had not, to dictate on the question of the marriage of the Spanish Queen? Such a pretension might have been intelligible in the government of Charles the Tenth; but it was treason against all constitutional principles when put forward by the ministers of Louis Philippe.

In 1846, it was the object of M. Guizot to make out that there was a marked difference between the policy of Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston on these Spanish Marriages. He wished to imply that the secretary of the Peel Government fully admitted the principle that none but a Bourbon should aspire to the hand of the Queen; and that it was only when the Whig minister returned to power, that any diffi-

culty arose. But this is most incorrect. Lord Aberdeen's opinion on that point was precisely the same as Lord Palmerston's; to every Englishman it must be obvious that it could not be otherwise. For some time after this notification of M. Guizot, Lord Aberdeen, according even to the acknowledgment of the French Government, was most reserved. Though he had not opposed the French policy, it was not until the visit of Her Majesty to King Louis Philippe at Eu, in the September of 1843, that the ministers of the two nations came to any satisfactory understanding. That was a time of great festivity. Louis Philippe did all he could to entertain his illustrious guest: there were grand pic-nics in a truly royal style; there were reviews; there were balls; but, amid all this rejoicing and magnificence, which served to fill the columns of newspapers, and gratify the curiosity of the multitudes on both sides of the Channel, the King had a keen eye to business; and the great topic of conversation in the royal circle was the Spanish marriages. The common opinion is, that it was decided between the Foreign Secretaries of the two Governments, that France should abstain from proposing one of the sons of the King for the hand of the Queen of Spain, and

that England should not put forward a prince of the House of Coburg. But when the French Government declared its intention of confirming the choice of the Queen to the Bourbon family, it also voluntarily pledged itself to exclude the French princes from the candidateship. On that subject, then, there could be no further engagement. Lord Aberdeen only promised not to do, what he never had any intention of doing: he never intended to force a Prince of Coburg on the Spanish nation as the consort of their Queen; and it was easy for him to say, that if such a prince were proposed, he would not receive the support of England. As it was impossible for him to answer for the actions of other people, and especially for the conduct of such an impulsive personage as the Queen Mother, beyond this he could not go.

It was Maria Christina, and not any English minister who caused the Prince of Coburg to be seriously regarded as a candidate. She cordially hated her two nephews with that passionate hatred which only relations can feel for one another. Her first wish was that the Queen should have for her husband one of the sons of King Louis Philippe. When she was with difficulty made to comprehend the impossibility of gratifying this desire, she began, with the same

importunity to demand the Prince of Coburg. Louis Philippe took the alarm. The match-making propensities of these two kindred spirits were fully aroused. Lord Aberdeen's conduct was scrupulously just, without being so favourable to the partizans of France as M. Guizot represented it, when he attempted to make out a case against Lord Palmerston, in order to justify the miserable trickery for which this French statesman and philosopher must be held responsible. On the one hand Lord Aberdeen positively prohibited the English ambassador from taking any steps to advance the pretensions of the Prince of Coburg in opposition to France; and on the other, he assured the Spanish minister that, though Spain had strong reasons for choosing a consort for their sovereign from the Bourbon family, yet, should the Spanish Government and the Spanish Queen decide otherwise, they might count on the sympathy and support of England against any attempts that France might make to interfere with their independence. This is surely not adopting the views of France, nor did M. Guizot, in 1845, think so, whatever he might say in 1846 and 1847. The facts can speak for themselves.

In the September of 1845, Queen Victoria, when returning from Germany, paid the King of

the French a short visit. When she appeared off Tréport, the water was very low; and all her good subjects were much amused on learning that she was conveyed to land in that apparently unkingly vehicle, a bathing machine. The marriages of the Queen of Spain and the Infanta were again discussed, and Lord Aberdeen and M. Guizot again arrived at a conclusion. Another positive promise was made by the French minister; the fear lest the Prince of Coburg should obtain the support of England, caused the King and his Foreign Secretary to pledge themselves that in the event of the Duke of Montpensier being the accepted suitor of the Infanta, their marriage should not take place until all danger of the two crowns of France and Spain being united in the family of Orleans had been obviated by the birth of an heir to the throne. The conference of the two statesmen was most friendly; Lord Aberdeen was frank and sincere; from that time all reasonable suspicion of England acting contrary to the wishes of France, had King Louis Philippe really desired to pursue a fair and honourable policy, ought to have been set at rest. To prove that Lord Palmerston was the aggressor, and M. Guizot on the defensive, when the final resolution of breaking faith with England was taken, it would be neces-

sary to show that from this second visit of her Majesty to Eu until the moment when Lord Palmerston again became Foreign Minister, the relations of the French Government with Lord Aberdeen had been perfectly cordial.

Instead of this being the case, a very short time after the consultation and understanding, M. Guizot's suspicions were again awakened by his agent, and Lord Aberdeen was distinctly informed by the French ambassador, that if the name of Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg continued to be mentioned in Spain as that of one of the candidates for the hand of either of the Spanish princesses, France would consider herself free from the obligations she had contracted to England, and would press the marriage of the Duke of Montpensier with the Queen. Nor did M. Guizot confine himself to words. Lord Aberdeen assured him that he might make his mind easy, for that England had no wish to propose the Prince of Coburg. The French minister, in direct violation of his engagement with England, and while Lord Aberdeen was yet in power, sent positive instructions to M. Bresson to propose the Duke of Montpensier as the husband of the Queen or of the Infanta.* After

* M. Guizot to M. De St. Aulaire, Feb. 1846. M. Guizot's own words, when defending himself in the Cham-

this it was surely unworthy of M. Guizot to say that Lord Palmerston was the cause of the subsequent rupture. The French Government, in their blind eagerness to turn the two marriages to the account of their sovereign, were evidently, according to their own despatches, as distrustful of Lord Aberdeen as of his successor.

The objections made by M. Guizot to Lord Palmerston's conduct were most frivolous. The English statesman, it appeared, was to be blamed because he did not inform the electors of Tiverton, on his re-elections, who should marry the two Spanish princesses; because he took a month after entering office to consider the question; and because, in his

ber of Peers in the session of 1847, are enough to prove his duplicity, and that, six months before Lord Palmerston returned to office, he had resolved, if he could not have altogether his own way, of breaking with England. "Shortly afterwards," said he, "the name of the Prince of Coburg having been put forward by an eminent person in Spain, I felt alarmed, and wrote to Lord Aberdeen, who replied that I might rest perfectly reassured, and that I had nothing to fear on that side. M. Bresson, however, insisting that an intrigue was on foot to favour a Coburg candidate, I wrote to him *on the 10th of December*, 1845, to be on his guard, and as the arrangement was contrary to the doctrine maintained throughout the affair by France, to defeat the pretensions of the Prince of Coburg, by all the means in his power, *and to propose the Duke of Montpensier either for the hand of the Queen or the Infanta.*"

despatch of the 19th of July, he made mention of "a Coburg the more and of France the less." All this is very pitiable. To come from the mouth of a statesman acquainted with England, with public opinion in this country, and with the personal character of our public men, it was indeed paltry and ridiculous. Had Lord Palmerston been inclined to act as M. Guizot suspected him of doing, he never would have had a single defender in Parliament nor in his own Cabinet. From the merest selfishness, if from no higher motive, he would have hesitated before committing himself to such a policy. But Lord Palmerston, as everybody in England knows well, was incapable of acting in that perfidious manner. Whatever his faults may have been while Foreign Minister, such petty intrigue, falsehood, and trickery as M. Guizot imputed to him, are not in his nature. He may have had too little regard for the feelings of foreign governments; he may in his despatches have told them disagreeable truths in a disagreeable manner; but his most relentless enemies have generally admitted that in the whole course of his extended political career, he has been eminently manly, frank, and true.

To go into an examination of the arguments M. Guizot was driven to use in his attempt to

excuse his conduct; to inquire whether he was at liberty to give to an English Ambassador one day, a positive assurance, which was directly contradicted by his acts of the next; to recount all the shuffling, recrimination, and deceit which these unfortunate marriages engendered, would be now superfluous. The reason revolts, and the heart sickens, at the mere consideration of such excuses. That they should have been made by a great philosopher called in an enlightened age from the professor's chair to govern a great kingdom; that they should have been made by the great exponent and historian of civilisation, is perhaps the most humiliating spectacle of the degradation of genius and philosophy since Lord Bacon was sentenced for corruption on the seat of judgment.

The means employed by the French Government to induce the Spanish Court and Ministry to act in complete subservience to the views of King Louis Philippe, were the simplest in the world. Of the two sons of Don Francisco de Paula, Don Enrique was considered the most capable; for this reason he was less approved of than the other by France, as the future consort of the young and inexperienced Queen. Both Lord Aberdeen and Lord Palmerston had given the preference to Don Enrique; and M. Guizot

made a show of inviting Lord Aberdeen to unite with France, in recommending his pretensions. The Moderado party and Queen Christina were then omnipotent at the Spanish Court; but Don Enrique had placed himself at the head of the Progresistas; and his success would probably bring about a change of government. Letters were shown by M. Bresson, the representative of the French Government to the Queen Mother, and to the Moderado ministers, implying that France and England had now agreed to support Don Enrique. The resolution of the Queen Mother and her political friends was soon taken. They determined, as M. Bresson well knew they would, to marry the Queen to the rival brother; and to prevent Don Enrique being proposed for the hand of the Infanta, made it a condition, as M. Bresson well knew they would, that the marriage of the Infanta with the Duke of Montpensier should be solemnised at the same time. Thus was this game of perfidy and intrigue played out. M. Guizot blamed Lord Palmerston for even mentioning the name of the Prince of Coburg, and still, with much inconsistency, represented himself as yielding to the importunities of the Queen Mother.*

* Lord Aberdeen's private letter to M. Guizot, dated the

It was on the night of the 28th of August, 1846, when the peaceful citizens of Madrid were wrapped in their slumbers, that, in the midst of a midnight orgie, the consent of the young Queen was wrung from her; and the official gazette announced the next day, to the astonishment of all her subjects, that Her Majesty had decided on marrying her cousin, Don Francisco. M. Bresson, in answer to Lord Palmerston's statement, denied that there was any orgie, or that he had taken any part in forcing the consent of the Queen. Now, it may be true that the French diplomatist never left his own house during that eventful night; but it is no less true, that he left a very efficient agent at the palace, Maria Christina, who was both able and willing to do and say all that might be necessary. Lord Palmerston had good authority for what he said; nor, when it is remembered

16th of September, 1846, and published in the twenty-first number of the "Revue Retrospective" is an unanswerable proof of the identity of his policy with that of Lord Palmerston's in the Spanish marriages. Lord Aberdeen declares that he might have done exactly as Lord Palmerston did, in mentioning the Prince of Coburg's name, and that after all that had been said and written, he could see no difference on the question between Sir Robert Peel's Government and the succeeding ministry.—*Revue Retrospective*, *No.* 21. *p.* 324.

what scenes have since been witnessed at midnight within the same palace walls, is this orgie at all improbable. M. Bresson's assertion will not go for much; night and darkness, and revelry were the fitting accessories of that deed which blackened the fair fame of a great philosophical statesman, sacrificed the welfare of Spain, made more than one diadem tremble on the head of its wearer, and discredited the cause of constitutional freedom throughout the world.

From the time when the announcement of the intended marriages arrived in London, the close friendship and alliance which had united England with the Orleans dynasty was broken for ever. From that time England took her own course, and left the false King and his false Government to their deserved doom. From that time the friends of all true freedom, the noblest philanthropists, and the wisest statesmen shrunk with horror at the spectacle of meanness, immorality, and folly which was seen on the other side of the English Channel. The throne of the barricades had been weighed in the balance, and found wanting. All earnest men, whether partisans of monarchy or of liberty, could not but deride and hate that abominable constitutional government which had betrayed its trust, and committed crimes from which the most servile tools of ab-

solute power in Europe would have shrunk from attempting.

Retribution on all the actors in that heartless tragedy was signal and immediate. Louis Philippe and his minister were both obliged to fly for refuge to the country they had wronged. But the King of the French is now no more: his minister lives to contemplate the work of his own hands. To have seen the dynasty he had so zealously endeavoured to serve ignominiously expelled from France, to have seen its fall regarded throughout Europe as merited, to have seen all the leading politicians of England look with joy at the frustration of those fine schemes of dynastic aggrandisement, to have seen the English Government happily and gloriously allied with a French Emperor, whom the House of Orleans had persecuted, and one of whose proudest thoughts is that he deserved their enmity, to have seen, above all, the horrible exhibition of vice and shamelessness on the Spanish throne; and to be conscious that all this, and more than this, was his work, that it was the natural operation of cause and effect, and that with it in all future ages his name must be inseparably associated, must, to one possessed of a heart beating with sensibility, and a mind capable of reflection, be a punishment more terrible than any that Dante has imagined of the damned, and to which

all the tortures of fiends and furies would be heavenly repose.

Iniquity begets iniquity. The utter destruction of the independence of Cracow, and its annexation to the Austrian dominions, was the first consequence of those ill-omened Spanish marriages, and the dissensions between France and England. On the 10th of October the two marriages were celebrated: about the end of that month King Louis Philippe had the exquisite gratification of receiving at Paris the Infanta as Duchess of Montpensier; on the 6th of November was signed at Vienna a convention, "revoking and suppressing" the treaties by which the independence of Cracow had been guaranteed for ever. M. Guizot then began to learn what he had lost in sacrificing the alliance with England. He remonstrated; he protested; he went so far as to declare that the whole of the treaties of Vienna had for the future no existence. The ministers of the three great Powers treated M. Guizot's words and acts with contempt; as indeed they had only too much reason for doing. How could the perpetrator of the Spanish marriages remonstrate with any propriety against the iniquities of other statesmen? The injury done to Cracow was a grievous one; but the crime was not of a deeper dye than that committed in Spain.

Lord Palmerston, too, protested against the annexation of Cracow, as he had protested against the consummation of the wickedness on the other side of the Pyrenees. England stood alone, strong in her own moral strength, and fearlessly condemned the tyrannical conduct of the three despotic Courts, as she had condemned the hypocritical French Government. Lord Palmerston demolished the manifesto by which Prince Metternich pretended to vindicate the proceedings of the three Powers; and Her Majesty, on opening Parliament for the session of 1847, declared the annexation of Cracow to be "a manifest violation of the treaty of Vienna."

If the year 1836 is to be regarded as that in which a strong public hostility to Russia was first indicated in the British Parliament, so this year 1847 must also be considered as the beginning of an epoch when the Conservative party had entirely worked itself free from that close connexion with the arbitrary Powers of Europe which it had inherited from Lord Castlereagh. The principles of true political morality and the vivifying sentiments of manly English nationality were now applied by Tories, as well as Whigs and Radicals, to the consideration of our foreign policy. The tyrannical conduct of

the Austrian Government after the insurrection in Silesia, the base and bloody massacre in Gallicia, and the final contempt for rights and treaties in the recent annexation, had produced their natural effect on the minds of English gentlemen. The most respectable Conservatives united with one voice in supporting the protest of Lord Palmerston; the allusions to Cracow in the debate on the Address, and the discussion of the 4th of March on the same subject, were cheering symptoms of healthy politics and earnest patriotism. When Lord John Russell rose early to speak on Mr. Hume's resolutions, the full sympathies of the House were with him, and his speech was one of the best he ever delivered on a question of foreign policy. The prime minister who in the face of Europe could enunciate such noble sentiments was indeed in a glorious position, and performed his duty well. One of Lord John Russell's sentences on this occasion deserves to be blazoned in letters of gold above the speaker's chair, and to be remembered in every discussion on foreign affairs. "Though in some of the late transactions in Europe," said Lord John, "our protests have been disregarded, our moral force has been increased and fortified; for there is no treaty either ancient or modern which we have either

violated or set at nought." The loud cheers from all sides of the House of Commons endorsed this emphatic sentence of the Minister. Men whose lives had been spent in opposition to each other were now all of the same opinion. Not only Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston, not only Mr. Hume and Mr. M. Milnes, but Sir Robert Peel and Lord Mahon, as well as Lord Sandon and Sir Robert Inglis, reprobated the annexation of Cracow, and gave their approbation to the policy of the Government. They might disagree on the propriety of suspending the Russo-Dutch loan; but it must be recorded that all the supporters of the Coalition Ministry were, so early as 1847, heartily united on this vital question affecting the relations of England with the Continent.

One exception, indeed, there was in that general chorus of unanimity. One politician there was who, not content with defending the annexation of Cracow, with eulogising Prince Metternich, and with approving of the violation of particular treaties of Vienna, also advanced doctrines which appeared to countenance the disregard of all treaties and all public faith, whenever two or three despots might join together. Nor did he stop here. As an historical fact it ought not to be forgotten, that in this

discussion, which commenced on the 4th of March, 1847, and which was continued for three nights, there was one member of the British House of Commons who, a few months after the time when the blood of the aristocracy of Gallicia had been poured out like water in a common massacre, thought it a fitting opportunity for calumniating all the Polish nobility, and for defending the first partition of Poland. Never, from 1772 until this time, had this detestable public crime, in which so many other detestable public crimes have originated, found an apologist in any member of any English party, Liberal or Conservative. Even during the supremacy of Lord Castlereagh, even in the days of the Congress of Vienna, even when the hatred of revolutionists was most violent in England, no politician in our Parliament ever stepped forward to apologise for that atrocious deed. The peculiar glory of Mr. Burke is, that what he stigmatised in 1772, when at the head of the Whig opposition, he still stigmatised in 1791 and in 1796, when he had become the champion of the Conservatives, and the advocate of the allied sovereigns. But in the reformed Parliament, and when all the evils of that crime were obvious to the meanest understanding, an apologist for the partition of Poland was now seen. He declared,

and those who listened to him could scarcely believe their ears, that "there must have been some good cause for that great and numerous race having met the doom which they had encountered;" that "he had no sympathy for the race so partitioned;" that "Poland was a ready conspirator, and a pamperer of the lusts of her aristocracy;" that "it was not the great Powers who had caused the fall of Poland;" that those who denounced the massacre in Gallicia, and spoke well of the Polish nobility, "raised a false cry, and appealed to morbid passions." The orator sneered at Lord Palmerston. He sneered at Sir Robert Peel. He sneered at Sir Robert Inglis. They knew nothing of high statesmanship or political morality; but the individual who now addressed them was there to teach both these important sciences. The House listened in silence to this remarkable speech, the like to which had never before been uttered within those walls. It was in a different strain from any oration on foreign policy that Chatham, or Burke, or Fox, or Pitt, or Canning, or Peel, or Palmerston, had ever spoken. This was the New Toryism; this was the New Morality. Members were shocked; the people out of doors, when they read that speech in the newspapers, were shocked. It was

considered almost incredible that such sentiments should have been expressed. But more incredible things than this have now been witnessed. That orator has lately, as Leader of Opposition, represented himself as the supporter of a liberal system of foreign policy, and he has even accused Lord Aberdeen for being in league with Russia, and blamed him for being friendly to Austria, though Lord Aberdeen has never, through any connivance with Russia, or partiality to Austria, thought of defending the partition of Poland.

Lord Palmerston replied to this speech in a thoroughly statesmanlike manner. He proved the orator to be mistaken both in his facts and his inferences. It was not necessary, said the Foreign Secretary, for those who blamed the annexation of Cracow, and considered it a violation of the Treaty of Vienna, to rely upon the annexed treaties. The 6th and 7th articles of the general Treaty were quite sufficient for the purpose. Nor was it true, as it had been stated, that when the Kingdom of the Netherlands was dismembered, the only Governments which interfered in the matter were Russia and England: the convention of separation was signed by the ministers of all the five Powers, and by one as soon as by another. Thus the argument of the leader of opposition, based on the fact that par-

ticular treaties might be set at nought by one party, without the consent of the other contracting powers, and without injury to the general treaty, was fully met, and his instance of the establishment of the kingdom of Belgium proved to be quite erroneous. Another argument which has found its way into the books of some professedly liberal writers on this question, and which was also stated by this parliamentary advocate of annexation, is just as unsubstantial as those which Lord Palmerston so conclusively answered. Because the secret history of the establishment of the state of Cracow was that the Three Powers could not agree which of them should possess it, and therefore made it independent in 1815, it did not follow that when they had come to an understanding in 1846, they had either a moral or a legal right to destroy that independence. The most severe condemnation of the conduct of the three Governments was that pronounced by Sir Robert Peel. A more humiliating confession, said this conservative statesman, than for such great Powers as Prussia, Russia, and Austria, to inform the world that they could not protect themselves from the disturbances in Cracow without overthrowing its independence could not possibly be made. All the pretences for this act are indeed contemptible.

In the year 1847 there was in the aspect of the political world much to gratify the partisans of constitutional government. Had it not been for the terrible convulsion of the following spring, the hopes of many good men might have been realised. As we now look back at the phenomena, they seem indeed only the mutterings of the impending storm. But wisdom after the event is not always infallible; it was the merest chance that the throne of the King of the French fell when it did; though nothing could have permanently upheld it, it might, with all its rottenness, have stood for some years. Unfortunately, at the time when in Germany and Italy the aspirations for freedom were assuming a definite shape, and the multitude were ready to listen to the counsels of prudence and moderation, a republic was proclaimed in Paris, Europe became frenzied with excitement, and wild political visionaries bent on carrying out their insane projects through blood and rapine took the lead. When they whose natural place in society was at the bottom suddenly found themselves at the top, moderate reforms were despised, and nothing but extreme revolutions and Jacobin republics would satisfy the craving of the popular mind. But the end had not yet come.

In 1847, free constitutions and political re-

forms became the rage. Men were eagerly seeking for novelties; princes suddenly determined to be popular; and at the head of this fashionable and liberal movement were the King of Prussia and the Pope of Rome. There were insurrections, too, in Portugal and in Switzerland; there were military occupations and monarchical jealousies; there was much coaxing, and bullying, and protocoling; it was a busy and eager time for sovereigns, ministers, and people; and the busiest among the busy was, as ever, Lord Palmerston. He was fairly launched in his element. His mediation and advice were in continual request; few of the political pilgrims to Downing Street went away unsatisfied from the shrine. Lord Palmerston's advice was freely, honestly, and, in most instances, wisely given. All the disappointments of that sanguine period have been visited upon his head; but, in fact, it is as absurd to blame him for the failure of the potato crop in Ireland as for the failure of many of these new constitutions, which had no sooner sprung up than they were destroyed.

Nor was the labour of the English Secretary of State thrown away. He kept the crown on the head of the Queen of Portugal. He hindered Austrian and French troops from invading Switzerland, and from destroying, under the

pretence of religion, the independence of the Federal Diet. That the policy of Lord Palmerston, in these two countries, was wise and just, experience has proved. Even when the revolutionary deluge swept over Europe with such terrible violence, Portugal and Switzerland remained uninjured in the general devastation. Had the extreme liberals in Portugal triumphed, it is easy to see that a military despotism and the success of the Miguelists must have been the final result of the Portuguese insurrection. Had the seven Cantons, which had leagued themselves together under the name of the Sonderbund in 1847, offered a successful resistance to the forces of the Diet, that victory must in 1848 have been speedily reversed, and perhaps have entailed most disastrous consequences on the brave and ancient republic. The true policy in both these cases was that which Lord Palmerston followed. In Portugal he supported the throne of Donna Maria, but insisted on the conformance of her government to those constitutional principles which it professed to respect, and on which the monarchy of the daughter of Pedro was founded. In Switzerland, it was not what he did, but what he prevented others from doing, that was so highly beneficial to the welfare of the mountaineers.

France and Austria were eager to assist the Catholic Cantons; King Louis Philippe had undertaken to support abroad that system of Jesuitism, against which the revolution of 1830 was a protest; and he united with Austria for the purpose of introducing those foreign influences into Switzerland, which must have been the consequences of the success of the Sonderbund. Before Lord Palmerston agreed to the mediation of the Five Powers, he insisted on the principle of the intervention being distinctly laid down; some delay occurred before the convention was settled; and before it could be presented to the Diet, it had triumphed by force of arms. The evils of intervention from abroad and disunion at home were happily prevented in Switzerland; the terrible storm that was about to rage throughout France, Germany, and Italy, passed over the Swiss mountains, and while committing frightful ravages on all sides, respected the peace, liberty, independence, and traditions of that gallant little republic, so strongly fortified by nature, and so bravely defended through centuries from the armies of the oppressor by hereditary valour.

The first indications of the hurricane might even then be heard in the sunny plains of Italy. The sky indeed seemed brighter than usual; the hearts of all patriots beat with a fonder hope; at

Rome the word "freedom" was once more openly uttered in the streets haunted by the glories of a Brutus and a Cicero; and though the Austrian bayonets glittered in Ferrara, the genius of Italy appeared to be reviving, while constitutional England prepared to throw before it her protecting shield.

Menaced by Prince Metternich, scarcely supported by M. Guizot, the new Pope and the patriots who trusted in him looked to Lord Palmerston for advice and aid. The head of the Church of Rome turned away from the governments which professed his faith, and asked assistance from the statesman of the great Protestant Empire. It has since been seen that this reforming Pope had indeed no settled principles of liberty; that he spoke of freedom and professed to emancipate his people, without having at all calculated the consequences of his acts, or the means to attain his ends. To see himself applauded as the champion of popular rights, was to him a new and exquisite luxury; but it was a very dangerous luxury, and one in which he does not seem inclined again to indulge.

Lord Palmerston answered to the call of the Italian liberals. In the autumn of 1847, he accredited Lord Minto on a special mission to the

courts of Turin and Florence. At first this nobleman seemed to be perfectly successful; throughout Italy his counsels were requested and attended to; he advised moderate reforms and pacific measures; under his superintendance, the political movements in Italy were happily progressing. Had it not been for the tremendous impulse given to the revolutionary spirit by the great outbreak at Paris in the following year, there can be little doubt that Lord Minto's diplomatic mission to the Italian States, and the cause of Italian independence, would have had a very different termination to that which they unfortunately experienced.

The year 1847 ended with peace restored in Portugal and Switzerland, with the French government discredited by its recreant policy and organised corruption, with the cry for reform echoing through France, with Austria sternly attempting to keep down the popular spirit in Lombardy, and intimidating the Italian princes who had yielded to the wishes of their people. Lord Palmerston was closely watched both by subjects and sovereigns.

CHAP. XII.

COUNT DE MONTALEMBERT'S SPEECH ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS.— ITALIAN REVOLUTIONS. — LORD PALMERSTON'S POLICY IN 1848. — AUSTRIA AND HUNGARY. — DEMANDS FOR THE SURRENDRE OF REFUGEES. — DIPLOMATIC VICTORY OF SIR STRATFORD CANNING. — GREEK QUESTION. — DEBATE IN THE HOUSE OF COMMONS. — LORD PALMERSTON'S DEFENCE. — MR. GLADSTONE'S LETTERS TO LORD ABERDEEN. — RETIREMENT OF LORD PALMERSTON. — CONCLUSION.

THE eloquent Count de Montalembert delivered a great oration in the French Chambers of Peers, on the 13th of January, 1848. His eyes rolling with a fine frenzy, he scanned the political horizon, and after taking a deliberate survey of all Europe, his gaze became fixed on one figure, whom he regarded as another Eolus, ready to let slip the revolutionary winds from their caves. There was no danger from Italy, there was no danger from the ministers of Austria, the social condition of France gave this great religious politician no cause for apprehension. From one man alone, and his detestable machinations, was there any reason for fear; and that individual was the Secretary of State of the Queen of

England. He was the great offender. It was he who, at the time when France and Austria were about to make a demonstration in favour of the Swiss Catholics, insisted on a previous understanding, while he pressed on hostilities in Switzerland, and thus secured the triumph of the Radicals. He was the executioner of Catholicism. He was kindling a flame which would cross the Channel, and show that prosperity, liberty, and justice were not the privilege of one nation alone. "When noble peers," said Count de Montalembert, "stand up in this tribune and speak what they think of the Emperor of Austria, and Prince Metternich, I may surely declare my opinion of Lord Palmerston."

This address excited much interest. It was copied into the English newspapers, and formed the theme of many leading articles. Editors in France and England echoed the tone of the orator, and there was probably not one of the kings, courtiers, or ministers, about to expiate years of misdeeds by flight and exile, who did not impute the unsettled state of society to Lord Palmerston, and not to their own misgovernment and folly. This was the cant of the period. Wherever there were disorders committed or revolutionary outbreaks apprehended, Lord Palmerston was sure to be considered the cause of

all troubles. This minister justly said, that no imputation could be more vulgar or more unfounded than to accuse him of wishing to excite discontent; in fact, such an imputation was just as absurd as to represent Lord Aberdeen as wishing to see absolute power established in all countries. The party spirit of the moment gave a currency to both these charges; and they were only too much authorised by these two statesmen themselves. Lord Aberdeen most unjustly said that Lord Palmerston endeavoured to create revolutions; and Lord Palmerston most unjustly retorted that Lord Aberdeen endeavoured to make despotisms.

Lord Minto's journey to Italy was much blamed by the Opposition in the session of 1848. Every Englishman may now, on looking back with calmness on the fearful agitation of Europe, be thankful that this well-intentioned but unfortunate mission, was the most important subject of controversy in Parliament at a time when the King of Prussia was compelled to leave his "beloved Berliners," when the Emperor of Austria was obliged to fly twice from Vienna, when the barricades of Paris were taken by storm after a deadly conflict, when the Austrian troops were driven out of Milan, the King of Bavaria forced to abdicate, the King of Naples

all but lost Sicily, and even the good Pope found himself obliged to escape in disguise from Rome. Lord Palmerston's mediation was asked both by the Emperor of Austria and the King of Naples. Austria went so far as to offer to give up Lombardy; and if the Court of Vienna felt their hold on Italy so desperate, Lord Palmerston cannot be censured for not thinking better of the chances of Austria than herself. Mediation was then an impossibility. The only arbiter to whom the excited populace could be made to listen was the sword. The time for compromise was in 1847, and at that time Austria refused with contempt to hear the counsels of moderation. Some of the Governments of Italy, indeed, were prepared to accept Lord Minto as an umpire; but after the revolution in Paris, they were powerless to resist the contagion of that fierce distemper. Again, a few months later, when Palermo was exposed to such a terrible bombardment, it was the duty of the English representative to attempt to stop that wholesale massacre and devastation. It was not, however, by supplying arms to the Sicilians that this end could be attained; and there was an error of this nature committed, which, had it been the effect of design, would have been highly censurable. But it was not so. Lord

Palmerston strongly and repeatedly asserted that all his efforts were made in order to bring about peace and moderate reforms. He could not be answerable for the success of his exertions at such a time; but that he sincerely meant well there can be no doubt whatever. His advice was never once given in Italy until it had been earnestly desired; and if it was not followed, he only experienced the common fortune of advisers, whose opinions are seldom acted upon unless they happen to coincide with the sentiments of those to whom they are given.

In Spain, however, he did, without being requested, state in plain words what his ideas were on Spanish politics, and foretold what the effect of the policy pursued in that country would be. The prophecy has very lately been fulfilled; the despatch was immediately returned. Unquestionably it was not such an epistle as ought to be written by the minister of one independent Government to the minister of another. As unquestionably, however, in that tempestuous time, Lord Palmerston, who had done so much for the Spanish dynasty and the Spanish Government, had a right, even unasked, to advise the rulers of that nation. The despatch in which his opinions were conveyed, was not intended for the perusal of the Duke of Sotomayor; and Mr.

Bulwer, in presenting it, committed an error in judgment; but if, instead of being offended at the tone of it, the Spanish Government had taken the course the English minister recommended, the throne of Queen Isabella would have been much more secure than it now is, and the public morality of Spain in a much better condition. Time has generally brought about a sure revenge for Lord Palmerston; one after another his enemies have fallen. His most bitter foes, too, have been almost without exception, like Count Ficquelmont and the Emperor of Russia, either secretly or openly, also the most bitter foes of England.

In Belgium the effect of the seventy protocols was now seen. While great empires were dashed upon the rocks, this little kingdom triumphantly rode out the storm. The Radicals of 1831 had, through the wise Government of King Leopold, become prudent politicians, and now rejected with disdain all the advances of the French propagandists. After such a successful experiment, it is impossible to declare that swords and bayonets are the only efficacious remedies for curing popular distempers. The Belgians in 1831, were quite as impracticable as the Italians and Germans of 1848; and though it may be necessary to use military force as a

temporary expedient, it is only by such methods of government as the King of Belgium adopted and steadily adhered to, that revolutions can permanently be prevented.

In this terrible year it was not the folly of the mobs nor the recklessness of popular leaders that was most remarkable; the most humiliating exhibition of all was that of royal cowardice. The great King of the French, the great Emperor of Austria, and the great King of Prussia, as well as the little German and Italian Princes, made before the world the same pusillanimous display. The white feather was the fashionable plume in courts, and monarchs kept monarchs in countenance. But the most ridiculous of all the ridiculous sovereigns of 1848 was certainly Frederick William the Fourth, King of Prussia. Even the old King of Bavaria with his wild mistress did not appear half so foolish as His Prussian Majesty with his great promises, his long speeches, his abject flattery, his meanness, and his timidity. He shouted as loudly for German unity as the most rabid radical at Frankfort. He cringed to the populace. He cringed to the students. He would do anything, say anything. He forgot all his obligations to Russia and Austria; he attempted to rob the King of Denmark of a portion of his territories with as little

compunction as any liberal felt who wished to dismember the House of Hapsburg and Lorraine. When such was the morality of Kings, how could they expect the ignorant and excited multitude to have better principles than themselves? To enter into an arithmetical calculation of the crimes perpetrated respectively by the people and by Kings, and to set one against the other, would be a dangerous and questionable proceeding. The balance might, however, be found in some degree even. The evil was certainly not, as such writers as Count Ficquelmont inculcate, all on one side.

The conduct of the King of Prussia to Denmark was much less excusable than the conduct of the King of Sardinia to Austria. The invasion of Schleswig was less defensible than the invasion of Lombardy; for the hatred of the Lombards to the Austrian was intense; and notwithstanding all that has been said to the contrary, they were treated with great brutality; while the King of Denmark had given his subjects in Schleswig, as in other parts of his dominions, a constitution, and his Government had been peculiarly mild and tolerant. In England the King of Prussia had no defenders; nor in any part of Europe except among the violent partisans of German unity in Frankfort. The

family ties which are now supposed to be so strong between the courts of St. Petersburg and Berlin as to prevent the House of Hohenzollern from striking a single blow in defence of the independence of Europe, were not strong enough to prevent the two Courts from taking decidedly opposite sides on the comparatively unimportant question of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. Prussia may be the tool of Russia; but the Emperor Nicholas has shown that he at least will never be the tool of his German brother-in-law. When German interests are subservient to his own purposes, the Autocrat respects them; but as soon as they come into antagonism with his policy they are contemptuously set aside. The Russian fleet, commanded by the Grand Duke Constantine, was off the coast of Denmark while the Prussian army was in Jutland, and was quite ready, had the necessity arisen, to act offensively against the forces of the Emperor's good brother and faithful ally.

Much learning has been displayed in discussing the rights of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein. The intricacies of the historical parts of this question resemble the long diplomatic controversy which began with the Prussian invasion, and was not finally concluded when Lord Palmerston left the Foreign Office. The arrangement made when hostilities were first suspended

between Denmark and Prussia, showed how commanding was the position of the English statesman. Wherever line-of-battle ships might float, the influence of England could not but prevail, and the weight of Russia become comparatively light. In the contest that was going on in the plains of Hungary, the relative power of England and Russia was entirely changed. There Russia was strong, and England weak; and because Russia was strong and England weak, the constitutional liberties of Hungary were destroyed, and with them the political independence of Austria. Lord Palmerston saw well the nature and the consequences of the struggle from the beginning. Had some of those exiled Hungarians, who have since blamed him for not more resolutely becoming the champion of their nation, understood the comprehensive bearings of the question as well as he did, the result might have been very different. They unhappily acted as though they were determined to give Russia the occasion to interfere, instead of confining themselves to the simple assertion of their rights. They desired to make the struggle not merely a Hungarian, but a universal conflict in which all the oppressed nations of the earth might at once find a simultaneous deliverance; and like all such great abstract schemes,

formed in opposition to circumstances, their heroic endeavours ended in a glorious but lamentable failure. Polish generals fought for Poland in Hungary; their aim was to prevent Hungary from ever again becoming united with Austria; with this object were the resolutions of the 14th of April, 1849, passed by the Hungarian Chambers. They met at the time with the approbation of Bem and Dembinski; and all politicians who look on the greatness of the conception, and not to the possibility of its execution, have praised the Hungarian patriots for thus carrying matters to an extremity.

Very different, however, must be the opinion of the calm and impartial observer. He may at once admit that he cannot see his way to the realisation of such plans, and confess that they are infinitely beyond his capacity. Such was the opinion of Lord Palmerston; such was the opinion of Lord Aberdeen. These resolutions were a serious error; they afforded Russia a justification for marching her troops into Hungary, and they also effectually hindered the English minister from undertaking any mediation at that time with any prospect of success. To insult the exile who has sought an asylum in England would be most ungenerous; but the truth must be told: the great Hungarian chief who was the principal

author of these resolutions, can see plainly the mistakes of every one else, but is quite blind to his own. His standing accusation against Lord Palmerston is, that the Foreign Secretary did not feel himself justified in receiving an Hungarian ambassador, and of thus provoking a rupture with Austria and Russia. But, had M. Kossuth intended to place it entirely out of Lord Palmerston's power to render any assistance to the constitutional cause of Hungary, these resolutions were quite sufficient for that purpose. When the cause ceased to be constitutional, the Russian sword could be the only arbitrator.

Count Nesselrode's manifesto, by which the governments of Europe were informed that the Emperor Nicholas had determined to support by force of arms the House of Hapsburg, followed close on the publication of M. Kossuth's resolutions. It cannot be denied that Count Nesselrode had only too much reason for stating that the plans of the leaders of the insurrection had become greater with the success of their arms; that they had exhibited the most hostile intentions against Russia; that her Polish provinces were threatened; and that under the circumstances, and when directly appealed to by Austria, she could not remain inactive.

This despatch of Count Nesselrode was singu-

larly moderate in its tone; and however much Lord Palmerston might regret the Russian intervention, he could not have prevented it. M. Kossuth has indeed declared, that he asked neither for the money of England nor for the blood of England; that all he required was one little word, and that this word Lord Palmerston refused to speak. This is easily said. But that "little word," so innocent in appearance, must have meant war, or it could have meant nothing. To suppose that Austria, when backed by the arms of Russia, would yield to the mere moral force of England is absurd. The Hungarian struggle was, indeed, watched with great interest in this country; the good wishes of the people were strongly in favour of the insurgents; and it is impossible not to respect the reasons for that generous sympathy. There is much in common between the national character of the Hungarian and the Englishman; and no man with a heart in his breast could be indifferent while such a contest was in progress. But nevertheless, England could no more have gone to war in 1849 for Hungary, than she could have gone to war in 1829 for Turkey. Those who blame Lord Palmerston in the one case, are just as unreasonable as those who blame Lord Aberdeen in the other. The cloud which M. Kossuth sees hang-

ing over Westminster Hall because of the answer which Lord Palmerston returned to his emissary, is a cloud which has settled down on his own understanding, and prevented him from making any allowance for the circumstances in which the English Secretary of State was placed, and for the great responsibilities of his position.

The first duty of an English minister is to England. He cannot be a cosmopolitan; he must be a patriot. There is a time for all things and for all men. The time, though near, had not yet come for England to meet Russia in open conflict. The lists had not yet been opened; the place for the deadly grapple had not yet been chosen; the gauntlet had not yet been cast at her feet. As long as Russia avoided any direct hostilities against England, and faithfully adhered to treaties, however injurious some of these treaties might be to the interests of Europe, it was not for the English Government to seek an occasion for a quarrel. Public opinion in England would not have permitted it; the sentiments of all civilised Europe would not have permitted it; and had England once directly interfered in the conflict between Hungary and Austria, she must have been prepared to accept all the possible results of that intervention.

Lord Palmerston did not believe that there

was then any chance of seeing a Hungary independent of Austria, or a Poland independent of the Three Powers. But nothing less than this, after the resolutions of the 14th of April, would have satisfied Bem and Dembinski, and M. Kossuth. Until complete victory had crowned the efforts of one side or the other, both the contending parties would have refused the terms Lord Palmerston might have officially proposed. They would both have laughed in his face; and he might justly then have been blamed for that officious intermeddling which has too frequently been laid to his charge.

But it is not true that he watched the contest with stolid indifference. In privately representing to Austria the dangers she incurred by calling in Russian assistance, and advising her in the most friendly manner, to agree to any compromise with her disaffected subjects, rather than place the imperial crown in the power of her insidious northern ally, he did all that he fairly could do until the conflict was decided. Austria, indeed, madly rejected his advice; though, had Lord Aberdeen been in office, he would most unquestionably, with the welfare of Austria sincerely at heart, have given her the same counsel.

The success of the Russian troops, and the

conduct of one of the Hungarian generals, soon rendered the termination of the war and the subjugation of Hungary inevitable. Then Lord Palmerston hoped that Austria would not be blind to her own interests, and that she would, by accepting his offer of mediation, give him the opportunity of strengthening her independence, and of releasing her from the shackles of Russia. In vain, however, were all attempts made to awaken the Austrian Government to a true sense of its position. Prince Schwarzenberg, a man of violent passions, and furious in his prejudices against England, could see nothing but his own wretched antipathies. Lord Palmerston made a final effort, in a despatch of the 28th of August, 1849, to induce the House of Hapsburg to make "a generous use" of the victory which another Power had gained for it, to respect "the ancient constitutional rights of Hungary," and to provide for the "future strength of the Austrian Empire." Prince Schwarzenberg would not listen to such representations. He thought fit to send, in reply, a foolish and insulting despatch, in which he reminded the English minister of "unhappy Ireland," and of other dominions of the British Crown, in which he supposed the authority of this empire was reduced to the same miserable

condition as that over which he presided. Nothing could be more unbecoming than such a reply to such a communication. No words can describe as it deserves, the puerile conduct of the Austrian minister, who, at a time when the Empire had only been saved by the direct interposition of another Power, could turn round upon England, and in answer to some good advice, display his impotence and his arrogance, his poverty and his pride.

It was not long before the temporary cessation of the existence of Austria as an independent political power began to be felt throughout Europe. At the very time when Lord Palmerston was composing that warning despatch of the 28th of August, which was so ungraciously received at Vienna, Sir Stratford Canning was writing from Constantinople, that the Austrian Minister had demanded the persons of all the refugees who, after their defeat, had fled across the Turkish frontier. The English ambassador immediately counselled resistance, and assured the Sultan of the support of his Government. He justly observed that the neutrality of Turkey had been much more violated during the Hungarian contest by the invasion of the Principalities and the passage of the Russian troops from the Principalities into Transylvania than by the

sympathies of the Porte for the Hungarians. The Emperor Nicholas had acted as though these two provinces really belonged to his own Empire, and had not the slightest connection with Turkey. And now he had resolved, with Austria at his feet, to show to the world that the Sultan Abdul Medjid was indeed his slave. Imperious at all times, the tone of the Czar's agents was now still more imperious. Though the first demand was made by Austria, it was evident that Russia was the real actor in the drama. Austria was never thought of at all; she was only obeying the commands of her master. An autograph letter from Nicholas and some strong declarations from his ambassador succeeded to the Austrian application. Russia demanded the Poles; her vassal, the Hungarians; but the spirit of both demands was the same.

The Turkish ministers were alarmed; but under the influence of Sir Stratford Canning they persisted in their refusal. Then was seen the real value of the Treaty of the 13th of July, 1841. Then was seen whether Russia had lost or gained in the long diplomatic struggle from the treaties of Adrianople and Unkiar Skelessi. She found herself powerless; she found the British Ambassador the directing spirit of the Divan; she found that even in the moment of

her success in Hungary and with Austria in her power, the Porte ventured to look her steadily in the face, and bid her defiance. All the manœuvres of the Emperor, all the dexterity of his diplomacy, all his military occupations, all his moderation in 1839, and his careful watching of events, had ended in securing the triumph of the English Minister. He saw that in twenty years he had not advanced a step towards Constantinople. He saw that comparing 1829 with 1849, he had clearly lost ground. This he might have suspected before, but now it was evident to the whole world. For the first time since the days of Peter the Great, the star of the House of Romanoff was receding in the East. Judging by the experience of 1839 and 1849, was it so very certain that the throne of the Constantines would become the inheritance of the successors of Nicholas? Was it not England who now gained in every Eastern crisis? These forebodings crossed the mind of the Emperor; and from the moment when he was obliged to content himself with seeing the refugees sent into the interior of Turkey, and placed under close surveillance, instead of being surrendered to the tender mercies of the imperial court-martials, his resolution to retrieve his position in the East by some bold diplomatic

stroke, such as the mission of Prince Menschikoff, was taken. The affair of the Holy Places, by which France, encouraged by the example of England, attempted, though in a more questionable manner, to gain for herself an influence in the East in decided opposition to Russia, only confirmed him still more strongly in this determination.

There were, however, some great obstacles to be overcome before the decision could be acted upon with any chance of success. Sir Stratford Canning was raised to the peerage for his great services in the diplomatic war. Public opinion in England was strongly in favour of the stand which the Porte had made against the united power of Russia and Austria. All parties had concurred in approving the policy of the Government; as in 1840, so at this time, the English people on this great question had rallied round the ministry. Lord Palmerston, too, was still Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs. The promptitude with which this Minister had, without any communication with Russia, sent the fleet to Besika Bay, showed what might be expected from him in future. The Emperor Nicholas well remembered what the same statesman had done in the past. The pale shade of Mehemet Ali rose before the haughty Emperor,

and pointed to the Minister in the Foreign Office of England. In both instances, Lord Palmerston had acted, according to his own significant language, "like a man who meant to do what he professed."

It would have been well had not the Minister soon afforded his political opponents in England and the Emperor of Russia an opportunity for working his overthrow. Had the fleet, on its return from the Turkish coast, quietly anchored in some luxurious haven, satisfied with its achievements in Besika Bay, and between the outer and inner castles of the Dardanelles, Lord Palmerston might have rested safely on the laurels he had won; but rejoicing in one victory over Russia, he had resolved to have another triumph. He had demonstrated that he was more than a match for the Czar in Turkey; he now made up his mind to try a fall with him in Greece.

The Government of King Otho, trusting in the protection of the Emperor Nicholas, had presumed to treat with the most contemptuous indifference the remonstrances of the British Minister. His Hellenic Majesty had never forgotten the advice which England gave him when he thought of freeing himself from his constitutional engagements. The plain representations which both Lord Aberdeen and Lord

Palmerston made to him rankled in his heart, and under the skilful diplomatic surgery of Russia, festered into a positive hatred to England and everything English. The system of brigandage, the curse of the Turkish rule, continued even under the rule of King Otho. The most barbarous tortures were inflicted, the laws violated, the judges corrupted, and outrages of every kind committed with the connivance, sanction, and encouragement of the Court of Athens. Though the Greek subjects of King Otho were treated with great cruelty, and though the condition of his little kingdom was most disgraceful, the Ionians and Maltese, and all who had any right to be considered subjects of the British Crown, were peculiarly the marks for insult and oppression. They were whipped and thumb-screwed; they were robbed and pillaged; the unarmed boats' crew of a British ship of war was beaten by the Greek soldiers, and taken into custody. Mr. Finlay, a gentleman of Scottish origin, could get no payment for some land, of which the king had taken possession to build a palace upon and lay out a garden. M. Pacifico, a Portuguese Jew, had his house broken into, and his furniture destroyed by a mob in open day, and within a short distance of the guard-

house. For all these multiplied and manifold injuries redress was demanded; for none of them could any reparation, or even any apology, be obtained. Yet all these men were British subjects; and all of them, however humble their condition, had therefore claims on the British flag.

On the 26th of December, 1849, the English Minister at Athens informed the Greek Government that it would act unwisely if, counting on the forbearance of England, it neglected to satisfy the demands which had been made. The threat was no unmeaning one, as King Otho and his little Court soon learnt to their surprise and dismay. The English squadron appeared off the coast. Twenty-four hours were specified as the time in which, if no negotiation was entered into for the purpose of settling the claims, a formal demand would be made. No satisfactory answer was given; a formal demand was made by Mr. Wyse; and other twenty-four hours were allotted as the period for compliance. The Greek Minister, strong in the support of France and Russia, refused to yield, and appealed to these two guaranteeing Powers of the new Kingdom. King Otho's Government was informed that none of their vessels would be allowed to leave the Piræus. The steamer Otho

ventured out, and was soon in the power of the English admiral; "reprisals" were now made against the humble navy of his classic Majesty. There was of course no resisting the huge line-of-battle ships which, after protecting Turkey, now threatened Greece. King Otho and his Ministers protested against such violence, and confessed their weakness. An embargo was next laid on the mercantile marine; so stern and unyielding had now become the patient English Minister, and so boldly was the influence of Russia defied. The French Government having offered its good offices, they were accepted by Lord Palmerston, though he carefully guarded himself from surrendering in any degree the principle of the claims. Baron Gros went to Athens for the purpose of amicably arranging the business; but M. Pacifico's demands were a sad stumbling-block in the way of a satisfactory settlement. A misunderstanding occurred between the British and French diplomatists; Baron Gros declared his mission at an end; force was again resorted to; and unfortunately, while in London an equitable convention was being concluded between Lord Palmerston and M. Drouyn de Lhuys, the Government at Athens was compelled to yield at discretion to Mr. Wyse and the British fleet. A serious difference be-

tween France and England was the consequence of this mistake, and the French Ambassador left London for Paris.

Nor was this the only evil attending this naval demonstration against Greece. A powerful political party in England, composed of many different sections, highly disapproved of the manner in which this affair had been conducted. The Emperor Nicholas thought that now the time was come when Lord Palmerston could be driven from office, and a formidable despatch was fulminated from St. Petersburg at the head of the English Foreign Secretary. All his political adversaries combined against him, and the House of Lords passed resolutions by which his policy in general, and his conduct to Greece in particular, was emphatically censured. A supporter of the Ministry moved counter resolutions in the House of Commons, and the finest debate on foreign policy which has ever been witnessed began on the 24th of June 1850, and was brilliantly maintained for four nights by all the ablest speakers and most influential politicians of that great assembly.

Lord Palmerston, on the second evening of the discussion, in a speech which excited the wonder of all who listened to him, and which was as much admired by his opponents as by his

friends, proceeded to vindicate the policy that had been so elaborately arraigned and so vehemently condemned. The shades of evening gathered round him as he continued to address the House, and before he had concluded, the dawn of morning shone through the windows on a still attentive audience. Yet so masterly had been the effort, so clear the exposition, so interesting the narrative, and so dignified and moderate the tone, that probably not one listener felt the least sensation of weariness. Nor was this the only marvel. The minister grew warmer and more animated as period after period flowed from his lips, and appeared to deliver his lofty peroration, in which he boldly challenged the verdict of the Commons, with as much freshness and strength as when he first commenced to speak. All who looked upon the statesman that night, and observed his manly bearing, his dignified courage, his earnestness, and the consummate ability with which he handled all the subjects he touched, all who remembered the great negotiations with which for so many years his name had been associated, and who saw what youthful fire was yet burning brightly under the grey crust of age, could not but feel that high emotion to which Sir Robert Peel afterwards gave utterance, and acknowledge that whether the cause

the orator so ably defended was right or wrong, he was in himself one of the most perfect representatives of the English character that has ever lived upon this earth, and a just source of pride to the country whose interests and whose honour he had so long, so faithfully, and so patriotically upheld in every part of the world.

On the next evening of the debate, a great speech, of which the highest praise that can be given to it is that it was a worthy reply to that of Lord Palmerston, was delivered by Mr. Gladstone. There were many very excellent addresses made; but these two speeches stand out from the rest as masterpieces of very different kinds, and embodying the sentiments of two very different statesmen.

On the Greek question public opinion is yet divided. The weakness of Greece has pleaded strongly in her favour with some politicians, who thought, and justly thought, that the necessity for undertaking offensive measures against such a humble State ought to have been obvious to all mankind, that every effort should have been made to effect a pacific settlement, and that full warning should have been given, not to Greece alone, but to France and Russia as protecting Powers, before the strong arm of England had been raised even in a just cause

against such a puny member of the great commonwealth of nations. There was no glory to be gained in coercing Greece; and if Russian influences were to be combated, the place for intimidation was not Athens but St. Petersburg.

British subjects are unquestionably entitled to protection when residing in foreign lands; and if that protection cannot be afforded them by the legal tribunals of the country, with all due respect to the House of Lords, they have then a good right to look for it at the hands of their Government. But before their claims are endorsed by the Foreign Secretary, he ought to be sure that they are not exaggerated, and that they are in every respect honest. It is not enough to insist that the offending Power should disprove the accusations of an alien; it is the duty of the injured person to prove to the satisfaction of his Government, before calling upon it for assistance, that his demands are strictly just. If this reasoning be sound, and the principle correct, it is impossible to approve in every respect of the manner in which M. Pacifico's claims were adopted and enforced. In this demonstration against Greece, and in the mediation of France, there were certainly many errors committed; but it is not clear that Lord Palmerston was to blame. The best schemes are liable to

miscarriage; the best diplomatic agents sometimes make mistakes; and Lord Palmerston was not the man to extricate himself from an embarrassing position by accusing his subordinates.

Though it must be admitted that there were blunders and indiscretions in this interference, it may be questioned whether it was fair to single Lord Palmerston out, and while driving him from office, to brand his whole public career. This was the design of Sir James Graham's vehement invective; and there was much in it that was painfully invidious and unnecessarily acrimonious. It is a relief to turn from that speech to Mr. Gladstone's, in which there was nothing said but what a high-minded political opponent might justly express.

The doctrine of Roman citizenship, though extremely flattering to national pride, certainly cannot be applied in the present state of the world. In the days of Roman glory there was but one state, one empire, one people, one law; but in the multiform and complex relations of modern Europe, neither Oliver Cromwell nor any statesman can free himself from those international regulations which, whatever some theorists may imagine, are founded on the accumulated experience of ages, and are established especially for the defence of the weak against

the dictatorship of the strong. Yet this doctrine of Roman citizenship would, on the one extreme, as the doctrine of the Peace Society on the other, come to the same conclusion, and end in overthrowing all the barriers of international law, and in handing mankind over to the mercy of the most powerful and the most unscrupulous of tyrants. But the *civis Romanus sum*, as it is introduced into Cicero's magnificent oration, was most properly brought forward. The tortured Roman is made to appeal to a law which his oppressors, and even the people of the provinces acknowledged; and Cicero, who, like Burke, was as great a moralist as a politician, orator, and philosopher, acted quite rightly in putting it in front of his accusation against a Roman governor. Burke, too, might, for the same reason, justly assert the same principle in his denunciations of Hastings; for he was only insisting that the morals and the laws of England should also shield the natives of India, and that a crime perpetrated in Hindostan was of the same dye, and merited the same punishment, as a crime perpetrated in the United Kingdom. But to assert this *civis Romanus sum* in other countries, and against the jurisdiction of foreign Governments, is to misapprehend the spirit in which the Roman

orator used the exclamation. And to represent Lord Palmerston as maintaining, in his quotation of the same words, that his countrymen, when abroad, were above the laws of other nations, and that they did not recognise the legal authorities of the countries in which they found themselves, is, perhaps, equally to misapprehend the meaning of the English statesman. He could only intend saying, that if Englishmen could not obtain justice from Governments abroad, they should have, in their endeavours to seek it, the moral, and, if necessary, the material support of their Government at home. In the principle, as thus understood, both the Lords and Commons of England, as well as the great body of the people in every rank and condition, cannot but heartily agree; for to deny it would be to admit that their countrymen in all lands might be considered passive victims of oppression and extortion, wherever there was an arbitrary king, a cruel minister, a corrupt tribunal, or an ignorant populace. Mr. Gladstone and Lord Palmerston, after all, meant the same thing, however much their opinions might seem opposed.

There was indeed one part of Mr. Gladstone's speech which, admiring it as every one must do as a whole, was quite erroneous. He

drew a distinction between the intervention of Mr. Canning and Lord Palmerston; and affirmed that the earlier statesman had been successful in his interference in Portugal and in South America, while the Foreign Secretary of the Whigs had been in almost every instance unsuccessful and inexcusable in his meddling with the affairs of other countries. Mr. Gladstone even selected for especial panegyric Mr. Canning's extraordinary sentence about "calling the New World into existence to redress the balance of the Old," and considered such intervention as a perfect model of wisdom and success. But in fact, Mr. Canning's South American republics were not at all remarkable as successful political creations; and the British troops had scarcely been withdrawn from Portugal, when the constitution which he virtually, though not directly, attempted to save, was subverted. It seems then almost impossible to believe that if Mr. Canning's intervention in Portugal and South America was quite right, Lord Palmerston's intervention in Portugal and Belgium, where there are established constitutions entirely from his exertions, was quite wrong.

Lord Palmerston was blamed for perilling our relations with the great monarchical Powers by his constitutional propagandism. Mr. Glad-

stone argued, with much force and eloquence, that if England set about diffusing her political opinions and institutions, other States would take the same course; that the name of each Government would be the symbol of a party, and the consequence ensue that a system would be established destructive to the peace and happiness of the world. Abstractedly, nothing can be sounder than this argument; but the application of it is scarcely just. If there is one unquestionable truth to be evolved from the summary of the foreign policy since 1815, it is this: that it was not England who first set about spreading her opinions and form of Government throughout Europe; that she was forced at last to do so in self-defence; and that her first quarrel with the allied Governments occurred in the time of Lord Castlereagh himself, when he refused to accede to the protocol of Trappau, which he thought contained principles most extensive in their application, and hostile to the independence of all the weaker States. It was because the Holy Alliance systematically propagated despotisms, that England, as a simply defensive policy, was obliged to support a more generous system. Mr. Canning was as much assailed for his liberal policy by France, Prussia, Austria, and Russia, as ever

Lord Palmerston has been. Count Ficquelmont is surely on this subject a most unexceptionable witness. He consistently makes no distinction between the policy of Mr. Canning, Lord Aberdeen, and Lord Palmerston; he considers the principles, the objects, and the spirit of these three statesmen as identical; and justly dates this liberal policy from the last years of Lord Castlereagh's administration of Foreign Affairs.

The conclusion of Count Nesselrode's despatch of the 19th of February, on which many speakers laid so much stress, was really intended by the Emperor Nicholas to produce in the minds of Lord Palmerston's political opponents that indignation which they so keenly expressed. This finished specimen of diplomatic composition was not written for the Secretary of State, nor for his government. It was drawn up for the Opposition in Parliament, and it admirably served its purpose. While Count Nesselrode was remonstrating against the blockade of Greece, he was thinking about the Turkish Empire, Sir Stratford Canning's influence at Constantinople, and the naval demonstration in Besika Bay. He therefore placed, as the head and front of Lord Palmerston's offences, the entrance of the ships into the outer portion of the Dardanelles, and concluded with a threatening sentence about Eng-

land abusing the advantages of her position, pursuing an isolated policy, and freeing herself from her engagements to the other Cabinets. All these strong reproaches might justly be thrown back upon their author and the great military Governments of Europe. The three allied Powers, and not England, had abused the advantages of their position and set themselves free from their engagements to her, and she was compelled, as in 1822, to oppose their arbitrary proceedings.

The awakened sense of the injustice of that continental system which Lord Palmerston had so strongly opposed, the courage and ability with which single-handed he had fought in the fields of diplomacy the battle against Russia, acted on the minds of many respected Conservatives, and the majority by which the judgment of the House of Lords was reversed in the House of Commons, was not composed merely of party politicians. It was not merely a victory of Whigs over Tories. The extreme Liberals of the Peace Society swelled the ranks of the opposition, and some men who had held high their conservative principles in all political vicissitudes, but who also had the just national feelings of Englishmen, positively refused to join in the vote against Lord Palmerston.

After the great issue had been decided, the session of 1850 was rapidly brought to a close, and the legislators who had been sitting in judgment on the foreign policy of twenty years, dispersed themselves to the four winds of heaven. The most intellectual and the most earnest of Lord Palmerston's opponents went in the autumn to Italy, and found himself at last in Naples. He was travelling with no political object. Private reasons alone had taken him to the Continent. He was a highly distinguished member of a party which was considered opposed to all revolutionary disturbances, and strongly prepossessed in favour of established governments. In the last great debate he had censured Lord Palmerston for his measures in Italy, and had expressed himself powerfully against the contemplated separation of Sicily from Naples. He might be regarded as a friend of King Ferdinand, and disposed to view with a favourable eye the exertions which this sovereign and his ministers had made to preserve the rights of the Neapolitan monarchy. But Mr. Gladstone beheld scenes which struck him with horror; he saw in action such a brutal tyranny, without aim or purpose except for simply increasing human misery, that shocked by all he had witnessed, Conservative and Englishman as he was, he felt it a sacred duty to attempt

to stop the further committal of such crimes. He visited the persecuted patriots in their dungeons. With his own hands he grasped their chains, and endeavoured to administer consolation to those whose heads were bowed down in despair.

On his return to England he communicated the results of his humane investigations to Lord Aberdeen, in the hope that this nobleman's great private influence might induce the King of Naples to unlock the fetters his ministers had fastened round the limbs of good men and worthy citizens. Months, however, passed away, and no relaxation of this execrable persecution was experienced. Mr. Gladstone then reluctantly sent his Letters to the press, and solemnly impeached, before the great bar of public opinion, the official miscreants, who, violating every divine and human law, and using the influences of a Government for the most devilish purposes, revelled in the wretchedness they inflicted on their fellow-creatures. These Letters created a great sensation throughout Europe and the civilised world. The Neapolitan Ministers found themselves arraigned as criminals. They were obliged at last to reply to these grave accusations; and there were Englishmen not ashamed to countenance their feeble rejoinder,

and make a show of holding the balance even between the accuser and the accused; as though Mr. Gladstone's simple testimony was not of more weight than the rambling assertions of any hired apologist for such atrocities. The official reply to Mr. Gladstone is now forgotten; his Letters remain, and will remain. Before him he has a great career; the most accurate observers of English politics look the most confidently to his future; so great are his abilities, and so high his character, that there is nothing he may undertake which he cannot accomplish, and no public station he may aspire to, which he cannot worthily fill; he may live many years; he may do many great things; he may occupy a great space in the history of the reign of Queen Victoria; but whatever may be the lustre of his achievements as a statesman, his crowning glory must ever be the two little pamphlets in which he pleaded so nobly for the manacled Poerio and his suffering companions.

In no person did Mr. Gladstone's denunciation of Neapolitan tyranny find more hearty sympathy than in Lord Palmerston; nor did he, in his high official position, merely praise the Letters in the House of Commons and excite the cheers of his countrymen. He sent copies of the work to the different Embassies abroad, and

charged the ambassadors to bring them to the knowledge of the Governments to which they were accredited, that the world might see what a hideous tyranny was that of King Ferdinand. Mr. Gladstone's pamphlets produced political consequences. His appeal to the common sentiments of mankind against a barbarous system of injustice and oppression had united politicians who admired Lord Palmerston and politicians who admired Lord Aberdeen, in one strong opinion. It was asked whether the principles of these statesmen were quite irreconcilable, or whether they could not unite in one powerful government, for the honour and the welfare of England.

The speech which Sir Robert Peel made in the Greek debate was the last he ever uttered; it had acquired the sanctity of dying words; and that speech contained a fine eulogium of Lord Palmerston. The Secretary for Foreign Affairs had in 1841 maintained and even increased his reputation, while his colleagues were struggling with difficulties which they had brought upon themselves by precipitate plans of reform and colonial misgovernment. His unrivalled defence of his policy had left a deep impression on the public mind. But at a time when no great questions of foreign policy were being agitated, and when the Secretary's enemies seemed to have

abandoned all hope of overthrowing him in the House of Commons, it was suddenly announced, to the surprise of all Europe, that Lord Palmerston had retired from the Whig Ministry.

All men looked forward to the meeting of Parliament in the February of 1852, in order to learn the reasons for this extraordinary catastrophe. They were given by Lord John Russell on the first night of the session; and they have ever since remained, as they were thought by every impartial person at the time they were delivered, singularly perplexing and unintelligible.

A statesman with such good intentions and so much simplicity of character as Lord John Russell cannot have a single personal enemy. But in a work embracing the foreign policy of so many years, a writer might justly be accused of cowardice if he were to hesitate in giving his candid opinion of the explanations of the 3rd of February, 1852. The two speeches are now historical documents; they cannot be destroyed; they cannot be passed over. It must then be declared that the reasons Lord John Russell gave in explanation of the dismissal of Lord Palmerston were quite inadequate, and that no sufficient justification of that most serious determination has ever yet been made. It was not shown that the Foreign Secretary did anything

more than express a private opinion to the French Ambassador, to the effect that, at a time when civil war was imminent in France, and when it was clear that the power of the President and that of the National Assembly could not exist together, the arbitrary Government of a Louis Napoleon was preferable to the precarious administration of a M. Thiers and his brethren in intrigue. Had this opinion been wrong, it was still only the opinion of the Foreign Secretary; and there has always been a recognised distinction between private conversations with an ambassador and public despatches to a foreign Government. To what a length Mr. Canning went in declaring his sentiments not only on affairs abroad, but also on George the Fourth himself, may be seen in the letters of Marcellus. In later times it was the intimate private friendship of Lord Aberdeen and M. Guizot which, far more than the public and formal acts of Sir Robert Peel's administration gave reality to the *entente cordiale.*

Had Lord Palmerston then been wrong in his opinion, he only compromised himself; but there is now no doubt whatever that he was right. They who were once hostile, but are now friendly to the French Emperor, may justly say that it was only from experience

that they could judge of the wisdom of the measures of Louis Napoleon. But Lord Palmerston was in a different position; ever since the December of 1848 he had been in a situation to form a good opinion of the personal character of the new Emperor, and of his most influential ministers. M. Drouyn de Lhuys, in particular, had been in the days of the Republic Foreign Minister, and afterwards ambassador to the Court of St. James's. In approving the President's strong measures in the December of 1851, Lord Palmerston then, if no other statesman did, knew well what he was doing. He was not treading on unknown ground. The light of the past guided him in the present, and gave him confidence in the future. That the English Minister, with his great European reputation, with his boundless knowledge of foreign affairs, and his sixteen years' experience in the administration of the Foreign Office, may have gradually become dictatorial in his department, and not inclined to listen much to the advice of his colleagues, may also be true. But even for this there is some excuse. He was not placed in his official position to fill up a temporary vacancy, or to register the acts of others. A minister of his standing and character must be taken on his own terms; the only point to be

settled is, whether the Foreign Minister of this great empire is to be a statesman or a clerk.

This much it was necessary to say on as painful a quarrel as ever occurred between two Ministers, who are both deservedly esteemed. It was a pitiful termination to a close friendship which appeared until 1851 to grow stronger in the wear and tear of public life. The difference was only temporary; Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston are now again in the same Cabinet, and every Englishman with any patriotic feeling in his bosom must wish that these two associates in so many dangers and so much glory may continue united until the last moments of their political career. It is only England herself who must suffer in the unnatural contentions of her worthiest sons.

We are now engaged in a great war which requires all the patriotism and ability the country can command. England cannot do without Lord Palmerston nor Lord John Russell; neither can she do without Lord Aberdeen. The attempts which have been made to sow dissensions, and to represent Lord John Russell and Lord Palmerston as separated from Mr. Gladstone and Lord Aberdeen, are wicked, ignorant, and foolish. Those who have propagated such reports know little of Lord Pal-

merston; he is incapable of such conduct; he has never intrigued against the head of any Government of which he has been a member. He was faithful to Mr. Canning; he was faithful to the successive Whig Prime Ministers; and he has been faithful to Lord Aberdeen.

Before Lord Aberdeen's Administration was constructed, it was denounced as a Coalition; and, in the House of Commons, a declaration was made with much emphasis, that there was something in the very nature of such a Government displeasing to the English people. Ever since then, the organs of the Opposition, taking the cue from their Leader, have continued repeating, with parrot-like fidelity, this profound aphorism. Like most of the generalities which proceed from the same source, it is altogether erroneous. There have been other Coalitions besides that of Fox and North; there have been great Coalitions extremely popular; the most glorious War Ministries in English history have been Coalitions. It was the Coalition between the Tories Godolphin and Marlborough on the one part, and the Whigs Sunderland and Somers on the other, which made Louis the Fourteenth, in his old age, after so many years of victory, bow his proud head to the dust. It was the Coalition of Pitt and Newcastle which

gave the law to the House of Bourbon, and raised the English nation to the highest pinnacle of earthly glory. A Coalition seems especially suited to a time of war, when mere party dissensions should be forgotten, and the wisest and most experienced statesmen of all political denominations should unite with one heart and one soul in support of their common country.

From this review of the foreign policy, it is clear that a war with Russia was sooner or later inevitable. This is a moral which every impartial person cannot fail to draw; and it may console us amid any temporary difficulties, and teach us to bear with patience the heavy burdens we may be called upon to endure. Since war must have come, it could not have come under more favourable circumstances. Thirty years of peaceful progress and of prudent reform have made the English people happy, prosperous, and contented. A long peace, with all its blessings, carries with it some evil; as a long war, with all its misery, brings with it some good. The evil of this long peace was that an unhealthy desire for innovation was being engendered; men were infected with a morbid desire to mount up to first principles, and to pry into the hidden recesses of their con-

stitution. The Peace Society was another morbid symptom, a moral monstrosity, indicative to the careful diagnosis of the state physician that disease was lurking somewhere in this great body which seemed at the first glance so full of health.

The good to be set off against the evil of this war is, that all schemes for radical change must be postponed; that, anxious for the vigorous prosecution and the final success of the contest, the most extreme reformers are even desirous of putting aside their darling projects. Time is allowed for the national mind to operate, and for the late reforms to harmonise with the older parts of the constitution. The most determined of innovators and the most stubborn of conservatives unite in wishing to see the war earnestly conducted; they have this one great principle on which they can agree, one sentiment which makes them feel that they have a country.

Never were the people in a better temper than at this time. Never was there so much to gladden the heart of a wise statesman. With the echo of every cannon-shot from the heights of Sebastopol, the pulse of the nation has beat stronger and stronger. The people are thoroughly in earnest; and their earnestness is directed to a wise object. They make allowance for difficulties, they are prepared to encounter

obstacles; but they know well that there is no retreat; that the way to peace is through war; that all that is dear to them as men and Englishmen is embarked in the struggle; and that they must either conquer or be conquered. The noble sight which England now presents deserves the attention of every man who considers himself a statesman. The minister who cannot appreciate this lofty spirit, and does not believe it to be of more account in a long war than all the accumulations of wealth and mechanism, is unfit to rule a great empire; for he does not understand his own business, and knows nothing of the high science of government. The people are more eager to give than their Ministers to take. They are resolved not to return the sword, they have reluctantly drawn, again to its scabbard, until it shall have dictated a peace which can be truly called a peace; a peace which shall include all the essential objects of the war; and not a peace containing such immoral stipulations as those which received the sanction of the European Congress of 1814 and 1815; not a peace such as is desired by some continental politicians, by whom the brains and hearts of men are subjected to a callous process of diplomatic lixivation, that they may come out of their laboratory crystallised,

like nitre, into a hard and brittle substance, but which also, like nitre, is explosive.

The Government is as sensible as the people of the magnitude of the struggle in which they are engaged. No Minister knows it better than Lord Aberdeen. It was because he was fully aware of the importance of the war, and of the mighty exigencies which would ensue, that he felt it his duty to the last moment to endeavour to preserve peace. He knew well that a contest with Russia was not, what some absurd theorists imagined it, a mere rapid melodramatic spectacle, such as may be witnessed at Astley's and the Adelphi theatre. Lord Aberdeen is, what his most inveterate opponent is not, a statesman, and a statesman of a high order. The liberal members of the House of Commons may feel confident that this Minister, with Lord Palmerston as his colleague, is much more likely to carry on this contest to a worthy issue than the man who is the only English politician that ever dreamed of apologising for the partition of Poland. That deed is hated by the people of this country because it outraged those moral sentiments which Providence, for wise purposes, has rooted in their hearts. It was this English morality which, more than the military force of the nation, van-

quished Philip the Second and Louis the Fourteenth. It was this English morality which struck down in its lofty flight the Imperial Eagle of Napoleon. And it is this same English morality which, however humble it may appear to those who are neither conservative, national, nor Christian, has now taken its stand in the path of the Emperor of Russia, and, more potent than the bayonets of six hundred thousand warriors, will, like a sword of fire grasped by an unseen but Almighty hand, prevent him from ever entering Constantinople.

THE END.

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00027300

Digitized with financial assistance from the
Government of Maharashtra
on 02 April, 2016